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CollectivED

**Working papers from CollectivED;
The Hub for Mentoring and Coaching**

A Research and Practice Centre at
Carnegie School of Education

Issue 6

November 2018

CollectivED@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

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Editorial: Welcome to CollectivED Issue 6

CollectivED: The Hub for Mentoring and Coaching is a Research and Practice Centre based in the Carnegie School of Education at Leeds Beckett University. Our aim is to support professionals and researchers in a shared endeavour of enabling professional practice and learning which has integrity and the potential to be transformative. We are interested in all voices, we will learn from many experiences and will engage with and undertake research.

Welcome to our sixth issue of CollectivED Working Papers. Once again it has been an absolute pleasure to collate these papers. They demonstrate the breadth and depth of thinking in relation to teacher learning and the significance of supporting, enabling and developing teachers and education leaders. These papers represent the lived experiences of researchers and practitioners working to support the professional learning and practice development of teachers and other education staff at all stages of their career. Please do read them and use them to provoke your own reflections and action. Information about the contributors is provided at the end of this issue, along with an invitation to contribute.

Our first working paper is a short thinkpiece by **Rachel Lofthouse**, which also acts as a second editorial for this issue. In this paper Rachel reflects on asking and listening to answer to the question: who do you talk to about your work in education and why?

Our second paper is written by **Ann Litchfield** whose reflects on how her unique school context gives the freedom to develop a committed best practice and is supported by emerging teacher learning structures. It is worth reflecting on to consider how much can be applied to other settings.

The third paper is based on **Kim Gilligan's** recent research findings drawn on interviewing a newly qualified teachers to consider the factors which can help or hinder the mentoring experience. Through this she develops an interesting concept of mosaic mentoring.

In fourth working paper **Kerry Jordan-Daus** offers a highly reflexive piece in which she considers her identity as a coach and practices as they emerge in coaching relationships.

In our fifth paper **Lisa Pettifer** offers insightful and comprehensive advice in her A-Z of NQT mentoring. Following her expert advice here could make such a difference to that critical make or break stage of a teacher's early career.

Our sixth paper offers a post-humanist perspective on coaching by **Kay Sidebottom**. This is well worth a read if you, even if you've never heard that phrase before. She defining coaching as a human-centred intervention aimed at learning, growth, personal challenge and development. A good place to start – why not read on....

In our seventh paper **Owen Carter, Babak Somekh, and Gary Handforth** report on their Carey Philpott Research Fund partnership project in which they have re-imagined staff appraisal. It feels like a good time to start to ask questions about what we do and why.



Next we have a paper reflecting on supervision in education, with a research by **Penny Sturt and Jo Rowe**. A really useful discussion in this paper is the distinction that they make between supervision and coaching and mentoring in education.

While most mentors working with student teachers are familiar with the key procedural requirements of mentoring and try to balance out the critical friend role, there are always ways to make mentoring more powerful. To address this opportunity, in our ninth paper **Rebecca Tickell** offers insights into a new Advanced Mentoring programme.

The tenth paper is written by **John Mynott** who reflects on research and practice evidence related to Lesson Study and recognises how engaging with it as a continuum might be helpful in understanding and developing practice for a range of impacts.

Our first conference review is from **Trista Hollweck** who reflects on the Teaching Learning Coaching (TLC) Conference in Las Vegas, convened by Jim Knight, and with focus on a range of coaching approaches.

In our twelfth working paper dental educator **Ilona Johnson** reports her research on interprofessional learning. There are some useful insights that might well be applicable beyond learning for clinical practices.

Val Poultney writes about Learning Rounds in our thirteenth paper. She is able to offer genuine insights into how they enhance opportunities for teacher enquiry; the key is in the stance to enhance lesson observation and related discussion.

Our fourteenth paper is by **Anna Cox and James Underwood** who offer a conceptual framework for reflective thinking. They highlight the significance of reflecting on moments of practice to support professional learning.

This issue has two conference reviews, the second is from **Laura Saunders** who reflects on the keynote by Julie Starr at the Ambition School Leadership Coaching Conference, which explores her thinking behind High Impact Coaching.

Our sixteenth working paper is by **Jane Martindale** who reports on her research related to the impact of School Direct on experiences of mentoring in ITTE. The picture is not straightforward, and her research offers practice insights into the changing policy landscape.

This month we also have two book reviews. The first is by **Susan Atkinson** who reviews Jamie Thoms' book 'Slow Teaching', and the second is by **Tomaz Lasic** who provides both a synopsis and review of Andy Hargreaves and Michael O'Connor's book 'Collaborative Professionalism'.

And we round off this issue with a Thinking Aloud CollectivED interview with **Pete Dudley** who reflects on the influences on his work, and provides insights into how a life lived in supporting teachers provides nuanced understanding of what works.

CollectivED Events

Details of upcoming events are as follows.

You may like to note the following dates.

- January 16th 2019 4-7pm (refreshments 4-4.40pm, and again midway).
'Changing our schools from the inside out; Is this what we mean by Collaborative Professionalism?'
This is a free event and bookings can be made at
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/collaborative-professionalism-tickets-51456157753>
- February 22nd 2019
Coaching and Mentoring in Education Research network meeting No. 2 – hosted by Leeds Beckett University (please email Rachel Lofthouse for details if you would like to join us).
- July 3rd 2019
Coaching and Mentoring in Education Research network meeting No. 3 – hosted by Birmingham City University (please email Rachel Lofthouse for details if you would like to join us).
- July 4th 2019
National Conference in Birmingham
"The First CollectivED Knowledge Exchange: creating powerful professional learning through re-thinking coaching, mentoring and collaborative leadership in education"
Find out more at <http://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/events/school-events/collectived-knowledge-exchange-creating-powerful-professional-learning-in-education/>

To be added to our mailing list regarding these and other regional events please email CollectivED@leedsbeckett.ac.uk or keep an eye on twitter @CollectivED1.

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Talking Matters

A Thinkpiece Working Paper by Rachel Lofthouse

This is a quick reflective piece, not a full blown working paper, think of it as a second editorial if you like.

Recently I have had the privilege of working with a wide range of teachers, student teachers and school leaders in sessions that are quite unusual for me. For the most part they were one-off sessions, some with people I may never meet again. They were each convened by others rather than me; one was a professional development conference in an international school, one an evening seminar in my role as visiting professor. Further discussions were with teachers and leaders of teacher research in a local school, about 70 student teachers at various stages of training, NQTs and NQT+1 attending a Saturday support event and newly appointed SLEs. In each case I asked the participants a simple question; 'Who do you talk to about your work in education and why?'.

I asked this question because if you search for images of teachers or teaching they are nearly always pictured alone, or as the single adult amongst a sea of pupils. 'Leaders' are also often depicted as figureheads or apparently

visionary people, shouldering the role independently.

Away from the staffroom teaching can seem a solitary endeavour. It is easy to read the teacher standards in England as criteria waiting for you to prove your individual worth. Even once qualified navigating your chosen career path can create a sense that you need to be the chosen one. Teaching can make you feel that it is you against the world (both in triumph and in defeat), and learning to teach and maintaining your success as a teacher or school leader can be assumed to be down to the individual.

CollectivED (as the name of our research and practice centre suggests) is about the power of the 'collective' in supporting and sustaining professional development, practice and learning. Whether through engaging in mentoring, coaching, or activities which rely on professional conversations, we focus on how educators (at all career stages, in all sectors and in a wide range of roles) can thrive through learning and working together.



I also ask this question because I believe it matters. It draws our attention to an important focus – our ‘work in education’ – which relates to our practices in our own professional contexts and recognises that our own work matters. By asking ‘*who* do you talk to’ we recognise the potential of a wide range of connections that we make, both formal and informal, within and beyond our places of work, and also that the people who we choose to talk to matter to us. By asking ‘*why*’ we acknowledge that these conversations help us to address our needs, which might be related to our working environment, our specific roles, our past experiences and possible futures, our values, our dilemmas, our triumphs and our emotions.

What this question doesn’t do (deliberately) is start with a deficit, or assume there is a problem to be solved through conversations with others, or demand that we as educators engage in monitoring or self-surveillance of our work. I stress that because in that respect that’s a different starting place from many professional conversations or interactions. I also use ‘we’ rather than ‘you’ or ‘they’ as I believe that this question is relevant to us all, whatever our role in education.

A range of responses were elicited by the question across the groups of participants in these discussions. There were some

interesting contrasts between groups but I won’t go in to those here. In most conversations it was clear that we talk to partners, family members, colleagues (although more frequently it seems ex-colleagues) and peers (as student teachers) about our work. There was a strong sense that these people provided reassurance, perspective and advice, challenged our thinking and sometimes enabled us to change our decision-making regarding our work. It was also interesting to discover how relatively infrequently our current colleagues were identified as the people we talked to about our work. Maybe this was simply because the participants in the discussion thought that was not the answer I wanted, or maybe it tells us that the time, license and structures to talk to our colleagues about our work is in short supply.

The qualities of the conversations we do have, and the reasons for seeking out the people we talk to, seem pertinent to me. Have we squeezed out our social thinking time in schools, does it matter that few of us have staffrooms that we can chill out in and share what we are doing with colleagues, are our meetings consumed by some-one else’s agenda and the need to engage in the accountability culture?

Quite a few of our working papers in this issue (like the former issues) highlight the value of professional conversations. These can emerge through defined professional development approaches, such as lesson study, learning rounds or mentoring in initial teacher education. They can also develop through coaching for a wide range of purposes, not least the sense of solidarity that can emerge when we start to talk in real depth with people who share our concerns, and who can support our own thinking. Professional conversations also emerge through our participation in conferences, and through deliberately designed courses such as those which enable inter-professional learning.

All of these practices, and more, are discussed in this issue of CollectivED working papers. I hope that this issue of working papers offers you something new to reflect on, as well as helping to further develop your thinking and practice in an area that you are already familiar. Most of all I hope that you take time to talk to someone about something that you have read here. Who knows what that conversation might lead to.



Developing a Coaching Model integral to the Quaker Educational Ethos

A Practice Insight Working Paper by Ann Litchfield

The impact of formalised lesson observations has always been extremely limited and limiting in scope. Formal observations see most of us 'showcasing' and wasting hours devising lessons simply to ensure we meet grade descriptors. This process teaches us very little about what actually goes on in classrooms. Dylan Wiliam writes at length about the futility of classroom observations, pointing out that they are no more than a snapshot (0.0079% of a teacher's timetable) and that, for a truly unbiased view the teacher would actually have to be observed by six different observers and with a range of classes. I have worked with great teachers who could always get 'Outstanding' grades and with great teachers who couldn't. The process always seemed to be arbitrary and contrived. The playing field was always deeply flawed, but it was our working experience with AWL (Assessment without Levels) and the creation of a bespoke system of student assessment that made us think we could, and should, do something similar for our teachers.

At our school, we decided quite early on that formalised lesson observations had to go and having done some research via The DfE,

EduTwitter (one of the greatest teacher development tools I've ever encountered) and various blogs, such as Shaun Allison, Teacher Toolkit and especially Chris Moyse we formed a working party to develop a model that would work for us. The following outlines our planning and strategies to develop a workable programme of coaching focussing on self-actualisation and self-reflection with all our stakeholders. No longer passive acceptors of government policies, but proactive life-long learners; a great model for our students.

Our setting

At Breckenbrough School we have a freedom to develop a committed best practice that I have never encountered in mainstream. Breckenbrough is a Non-Maintained Special School (NMSS). We offer day and residential placements for boys with a range of complex needs, including Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC), Asperger's Syndrome (AS), Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA), Tourette's Syndrome (TS) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). We want our students to develop in such a way that they are able:



- To be themselves, aspire and be successful.
- To develop strategies and coping mechanisms to move towards a level of self-actualisation in order to thrive in the neurotypical world.

Our Quaker ethos underpins all we aspire to build in our students: respect, tolerance, equality, understanding and forgiveness. We deliberately avoid punishment and forced discipline, believing that resolution of conflict can come about through behaviour modelling and restorative justice. These values and ethos is then obviously extended to our teaching team.

Developing our approach

In her CollectivED paper (2017) Ruth Whiteside outlined her difficulties in removing Performance Management from her coaching model, because of her 'dual role' in working with 'underperforming teachers' as part of a precursor to potential capability measures. I did not want teachers to see our model in this way, so I sought out three volunteers, one of whom is seen across the school as an outstanding practitioner. I was always aware that this label is mainly arbitrary and that it can create a sense of complacency in your own professional development – even outstanding teachers shouldn't be standing

still. (I have outlined our initial processes in my blog - link below). The main part of this was to initially canvass teachers on their opinions about lesson observations (they all felt it was a pretty meaningless process) and then to form a core group to develop our model. I limited inclusion to just two experienced teachers the other four were newly qualified teachers and one TA. Over the course of the year, I fed back to the core group regarding my coaching experiences with my volunteer 'coachees' and we created a Coaching Journal as our evidence file – this will never be used in any form of 'capability' it stands solely as a testament to professional development and exploration of practice. We realised too that the sea-change in culture, that is moving away from Performance Management, is difficult and staff still feel nervous and on edge. This will take some time to overcome as we build trust and shared experiences.

Along the way we made (or so it seemed!) many changes to our Coaching Journal as we refined and developed it into the model we felt would work for us. Underpinning it was, of course, Teaching Standards (as a set of principles), but the essence of the model is more fully weighted with our Quaker values of integrity, equality, simplicity, community, stewardship of the Earth, and peace. We determined early on

that these values have to be lived by our community and therefore our model has grown to fully encompass them. We also chose to label our model as a 'Coaching and Mentoring' programme. This came about towards the end of our planning and preparation and was due to a last-minute course, attended by one of the core group and provided by the NEU who suggested that an additional mentoring focus would better support newer teachers as well as those who had become 'a bit set in their ways'. We agreed.

Rolling out the model

The Core Group knew from the beginning that our students should be involved in this process so we determined to build in a student voice questionnaire at the beginning and repeat this at the end of the coaching cycle. We also want coached staff to feel this is their experience, so to this end, all teachers will be asked to choose up to five students (an arbitrary number, but given the size of our tiny school, a sizable number for feedback!) and they will then also determine the questions to be given. We felt it was important that this exercise be an evaluation which stemmed from the teacher wanting to consciously think about their practice and what it meant to their students.

We now have two Inset days at the beginning of the academic year and we were able to utilise one of these for coach/coachee refresher training and initial meetings. For this academic year only, our coaches are line managers – not the best solution, but one we are running with in order to ensure all staff work together to continue to refine the model. We placed our younger teachers, members of the core group, with SLT to talk them through the process. There has been some difficulty with mind-set as we try to realign our attitudes away from Performance Management and 'observations'. When a coach observes the lesson, this reinforces the idea of judgement – terminology is a first step and we now refer to 'coaching sessions'. By the next academic year, we want to move completely away from coaches being line managers and want to have in place a body of coaches from the rank and file who will coach each other, hopefully across subject areas.

The difficulty has been 'but what do we do about Performance Management!?' – stemming from an HR perspective. However, we have used the rationale from [Chris Moyse's website](#) wherein we approach everything from the standpoint that our teachers are professionals and that even in the case of capability, this will still be approached from that perspective. We support our staff and we help them to develop. Having said that, we do



need to look at Performance Management and what it means once we have removed Lesson Observations from our 'arsenal'. We came up with this solution: For this year only, line managers will meet to discuss data, intervention and monitor exercise books. SLT will conduct a termly 'Learning Walk' – this will be written up after the event, no notes will be taken. One of these 'walks' will be conducted by the SENCo who will monitor and support staff from this perspective only. This PM divorce will be something with which we have to challenge ourselves – at the moment it's a bit 'messy'!

The final, and for me most interesting, development was in discussion with an outstanding teacher who could not think of some classroom-based project they wanted to develop. My initial response was to ask what they would have chosen as a target had they still been on PM, but we still came up against a blank wall. But then, looking at Teaching Standard 8 and the expectation to 'Fulfil wider professional responsibilities' (which could include things such as making 'a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the

school') – we agreed that the process doesn't have to include classroom-based projects at all and the teacher will now look at developing their practice outwards in support of colleagues, possibly as a counsellor. Either way, this supports both students and staff across the school and it will involve no 'classroom-based sessions/observations' other than the termly Learning Walk. I'm really excited about this – it's like the creation of another tunnel after Tom, Dick and Harry were blocked!

This is our pilot year and I know we will make many adjustments as we go, as we should; this is a living breathing model and it needs to be one we can develop, adapt and change as we change because of it. I firmly believe that this is how we reclaim our profession. Even Ofsted noted recently that some government initiatives (such as The National Strategies) created a form of passivity in the profession as we meekly accepted the minutiae of 'this is how to teach' – I don't know if that's what they intended, but I know that coaching and trusting each other is how we get it back.



References

This working paper has been adapted from Ann's original blog post which can be found at <https://anarchy.blog/2018/02/11/a-coaching-journey/>, with the follow up <https://anarchy.blog/2018/09/18/coaching-in-practice/>

Dylan Wiliam (2016) Leadership for Teacher Learning, Learning Sciences International

DfE Coaching for Schools

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/327944/coaching-for-teaching-and-learning.pdf

Why Coaching Works - Shaun Allison

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/327944/coaching-for-teaching-and-learning.pdf

And his Coaching Toolkit

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Coaching-Toolkit-Practical-Guide-School/dp/1412945372>

Teacher Toolkit Ross Morrison McGill

<https://www.teachertoolkit.co.uk/?s=coaching>

Chris Moyse Live Coaching

<https://chrismoyse.wordpress.com/>



The Benefits of Mosaic Mentoring for Early Career Teachers

A Research Working Paper by Kim Gilligan

The impetus for this piece emerged from an ongoing concern with the quality of mentoring that some students and newly qualified teachers engage with when in schools. I had been aware for a long while that individuals did not necessarily get parity of experience and that sometimes things went terribly wrong, and a student or newly qualified teacher would even be at risk of leaving the profession prematurely. This discussion draws on my recent findings when interviewing a number of newly qualified teachers and looks at what factors can help or hinder the mentoring experience. It considers the power relationships that may emerge and how these may be avoided with alternative forms of mentoring.

Both mentoring and coaching processes occur in schools and are complex and multifaceted. The quality of the interactions that occur can make a significant difference to whether or not someone succeeds in the early stages of teaching and perhaps more significantly whether they go on to stay in the profession (Eby et al 2013). Mentors are involved in a range of interactions with their mentees and may need to navigate the full range of emotions that emerge during mentoring encounters both from themselves and their mentees. One of the most significant issues that may surface during mentoring is the impact of the disparity in power and how this

may be played out in the everyday contexts and between the individuals.

In general mentoring is understood as a more experienced mentor guiding a less experienced mentee and the relationship tends to fall in to two types; either relational (take a psychosocial form) or be very instrumental (focused on career development) (Johnson et al 2007). In my experience there are a number of contributing factors that influence which type of mentoring occurs and a significant one is time. It is common for the most experienced or senior members of staff to be asked to mentor but they are often the very staff who currently carry the most responsibility and even when very willing, will struggle to invest the time needed to support someone fully. It is also highly likely that those individuals commonly have a significant role in the NQT evaluation role which serve to monitor staff performances. This may bleed into the mentoring process. These dual roles may well cause tensions to emerge when the developmental side of mentoring suddenly switches to a critically evaluative process, attempting to measure performance. This can impact on the trust that has built up between



the mentor and mentee prior to performance measurement. Ball (2004) notes the insidious nature of the performativity agendas in schools and warns of the divisive nature of such agendas suggesting that many teachers are 'terrorised' by performativity agendas at all kinds of levels. Students or early career teachers can be particularly vulnerable to these regimes of accountability or what Foucault (1977) may describe as surveillance, a constant feeling that you are being watched and evaluated against standards.

In the case of student or early career teachers their performativity will be monitored closely, commonly through feedback after regular observations. The observation process has the capacity to be part of a critical reflection process and if done correctly and with considerable thought can be incredibly beneficial in enabling the mentee to accurately and sensitively be lead through a reflection process that will culminate in improvements in their practice and dispositions. The crucial factor in whether the mentoring is successful is the relationships that develop and how these work. In idealised mentoring relationships (Alexander 2018) the relationship will be mutually beneficial and will flourish with each member of the dyad recognising the strengths of the other.

Unfortunately, my experience of observing mentoring processes over fifteen years has resulted in me questioning an arrangement where there is pressure on one individual person to meet the entire needs of another in what can be highly pressured environments. In most other relationships between two people more realistic expectations would be negotiated and there would be an acceptance that each member may seek different aspects of support from significant others outside of the relationship (Kram and Isabella 1985).

During a recent research study I interviewed a number of recently qualified teachers about their mentoring experiences and found that most voiced a preference for what is usefully described as a 'mosaic of mentoring'. Kram (1985) describes this as a relationship constellation rather than a one to one mentoring arrangement. The participants described the benefits of what amounted to mentoring networks within a setting rather than a singular relationship with a more senior other. This was because with a dyadic relationship there is always the possibility of a breakdown in the relationship which may cause issues that can have long term impact. It is the case according to Eby et al (2013) that mentees often relate to people they see as similar to themselves, but if the mentor is not similar then that singular relationship may have limited impact. On the otherhand a

constellation of relationships may ensure that a mentee receives different aspects of support from a variety of individuals and relationships are therefore less pressured in terms of delivering every aspect that a mentee needs.

The constellation arrangement may, for example result in a mentee gaining organisational literacy (Blasé 1984) (knowledge of the norms of the setting), from one person and support with behaviour management from another, and then advice about pedagogical approaches from someone else again. We know that knowledge of the mores and norms of an organisation are important, but if a mentee receives information about the organisation from a singular senior manager then they may well get a specific ideological viewpoint based on the manager's position in the organisation rather than a more nuanced version from others describing it (Jokikokkoa et al 2017).

It is clear from the discourses of the participants that when mentoring networks were in place the hierarchical nature of mentoring was reduced and a pattern of behaviours more indicative of a community of practice (Lave and Wenger) ensued. In addition, the impact of the perceived power of the mentor over the individual mentee diminished. In a community of practice there

tends to be an emphasis on shared knowledge with value given to each individual in the community rather than just to those with more experience in a specific area. In the case of my participants, when this happened it was noted as being very motivational and was significant in them feeling that they had something to offer a setting rather than constantly taking from others. One of my participants felt that when working with an individual mentor their strengths in particular areas, like technology, were not always recognised but got lost in other discourses of deficiency which are common in relation to new teachers. In contrast when they had wider relationships that constituted mentoring networks they had a broader perception of their abilities reinforced by the different contributions made by them in a number of mentoring encounters.

Simultaneous interactions with a number of mentors allows a more balanced organisational socialisation to occur and shifts the relationship nexus from passive adjustments on the part of the mentee to a more active and enabling set of interactions, which can occur across different contexts. The impact of power is also less likely to be felt in quite the same way, as the mentee may be guided by a range of people each bringing their own relational and vocational skills to the table.

Although the research study is in its infancy, it has revealed important messages about the need to not idealise individual mentoring, as it puts too much pressure on both parties. Instead we should consider the value of alternative approaches that bring together a range of participants and contrasting attitudes into a cohesive support network. One important element of this is the fact that the support network does not rely on an outside body like a Headteacher, choosing the relationship but instead is driven by the needs of the mentee. The constellation may also lead to a less bounded process emerging where there is a wider focus than professional development (Cotton et al 2011) and the mentee accesses personal development through informal conversations constituting what may involve psychosocial elements.

These wider relationships enable subtle opportunities for beginning teachers to try out their professional and personal identities in safer ways away from the harsh gaze of performativity agendas. The impact of the mosaic of interactions across time appears to build resilience in different ways without negating the sometimes outstanding work that individual mentors do. The constellation formed in a mosaic perhaps most importantly involves the mentee in a process of self-determination where they have autonomy and a higher level of self-efficacy. What then emerges is a co-construction of knowledge that leads to motivation and a drive to succeed resulting in high calibre professionals being formed.

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Who am I, the leadership coach?

A critical and reflexive exploration of my positioning as a coach

A Research Working Paper by Kerry Jordan-Daus

We all have a story to tell. I believe that story “is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful” (Connelly and Clandinin, 2006, p 375). This paper is a story; part fiction and part auto-biographical. Sandra and the coaching scenarios are fictional, based on a fusion of the experiences I have had as a coach. I am real; or, rather the coach’s words in this story are my words, deliberately chosen because of who I am and what I believe. This story is about finding and exploring my real self or the selves I bring to coaching conversation, “the identity, character, and history of the researcher are obviously critical to listening, selecting, interpreting and composing the story” (Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffman Davis, 1997, p13). Through this story telling I am holding a lens up to myself, who I think I am. Through this story telling, I may discover that I am not who I thought I was; I may see my blind spots and that might help me in my work as a coach, to be a better coach and a better leader. Through this story telling I am

examining me; this is “Me-Search” (Lamb, 1991).

Sandra: *Thank you for today. I left exhausted but relieved that I had been able to empty my big bag of worries. You made me laugh when you sent me that children’s book. But OMG, it really spoke to me when I made time to listen. Listening to my own voice and time. Why did I need you to get me to that space? Onwards Kerry. I am going forward.*

Kerry: *It was uplifting to receive this message from Sandra. Today’s meeting felt like we’d got stuck in the toffee and fudge of leadership. I wondered how she’d feel me sending her a children’s book. It seems to have worked. I misjudged the session. I left drained, wondering if Sandra was going to mentally cope with the myriad of issues which she took out of her bag of worries. It felt dangerously close to Sandra needing some time out of work. It felt dark. Is coaching right here?*



The Education Doctorate and the Reflexive Task

I was very excited about Module 4 of my Doctorate. Jen and Karen (friends in an earlier cohort) had said I would enjoy it. I felt comfortable in the reflective space and being able to dust down my copy of Gillie Bolton. My choice of focus for the reflexive task, on my leadership coaching of women, seemed obvious. This is something I have been doing over the last two years and something that I have enjoyed. I have done a huge amount of mentoring of student teachers in my professional role as a Tutor on an Initial Teacher Higher Education Programme (ITE) and have in the past examined the differences between mentoring and coaching in the context of ITE. Being a leadership coach is new for me. Four years ago I undertook a professional development course on coaching offered by the University and then took up the offer of being coached by a senior woman leader in the University. I have gone on to coach six women, two from the University as part of the Aurora Programme (a Higher Education Academy funded course for aspiring women leaders in Higher Education) and four from Schools as part of the "Women in Leadership in Education" Department for Education initiative. There have been minimal opportunities for reflection on coaching and so I took the opportunity to focus my

Doctorate paper on this theme, specifically think about self and positioning.

As part of my own experience as a coachee I talked a lot about power and constructs of power, hierarchies, class, gender and identity. I recognise the complexity of these terms, however, it is not within the scope of this particular paper to examine their multiple meanings, but have used them to frame my story.

What is coaching and why this is important for Women

There is a lot in the literature about different and conflicting definitions (Passmore, 2007) and alternative constructs of coaching. I see coaching as "helping someone see their situation clearly and calmly in order that they can make better decisions about what they do" (Pemberton, 2006, p10). As the coach, I am not concerned with evaluation of my coachee's performance in the narrow sense of targets and outcomes and measurement of effectiveness, but supporting an individual to be the best leader they can be. This is what I bring to leadership coaching.

If you were to scan the bookshelves in my study, more than 2/3 feature women; women Victorian novelists, two shelves of Virago Classics, women in history and books from my undergraduate women studies in history and



philosophy modules. As I begin to that journey of making “the tacit explicit” (Munby, Russell and Martin, 2001, p. 889), I acknowledge the feminist lens through which I see things, try to live my life; this is me. Through my story I will examine how I think this impacts on my coaching

I believe that through coaching women have an opportunity to find a voice. I bring to coaching a belief that women find it particularly difficult to find their authentic voices in the world of education leadership which some would argue is still wedded to mainstream heroic leadership models and practices (Blackmore and Sachs, 2009, Fitzgerald, 2012, Coates, 2015, Rummary, 2018). Of course, women’s marginality in the education world is not unique; women’s voices are absent in many domains, social, political and professional. Through my Doctoral studies to date, each of my assignments has taken a feminist foci. I have used my studies to immerse myself again in this area. It feels that I am coming back to a place I inhabited as an undergraduate. Now, thirty years later, what is new, what is different; in what ways could it be argued that life is better for women?

Following the horrific trolling of Mary Beard on social media, it is possible to argue that things are not better; that suppressing

women’s voices is deeply embedded in Western Culture (Beard, 2014). Beard suggests that Western historical tradition has marginalised, suppressed and oppressed women’s voices; and in social media we see might see the twentieth century version of this phenomena. Her most recent book, partly inspired by the vicious, misogynist attacks she has faced as a woman using her voice, an expert voice as a world leading academic in classics, would suggest that this is still a very important issue; that if women are to achieve anything like equality, we need to keep talking about the way our voices are not heard and find ways to challenge this.

This is why coaching is important for me. By using our female voices, I am committed to challenging that to be successful leaders, we have to pretend that women’s lives aren’t different, or at least question the “cultural template that a powerful person remains resolutely male” (Beard, 2014, p53). Through coaching I seek to empower women to speak authentically, to be vulnerable, and courageous (Brown, 2012) and to problematise constructs of leadership. From vulnerability, honesty and truthfulness, I believe that we can take power on our terms. Through my coaching I am seeking to establish a safe and non-judging relationship where we can talk with candour, honesty and free from fear, about the lived experiences of

leadership in the fuller context of our lives as women; as daughters, wives, mothers, lovers, carers. Through coaching I am seeking to create strengths, that women can fulfil the role of leaders, right for them, challenging dominant leadership paradigms which I believe privilege a set of masculine behaviour traits. I believe that there is an alternative to managing like a man (Fitzgerald, 2014). What “if we stopped making women adjust to the patriarchal world of academia” (Rummary, 2018, p16) and dared to think, act and talk differently (Ahmed, 2017). This is who I believe I am as a coach.

The Structure of this paper

My story draws upon my coaching experiences over a two year period, involving six different women, all in new leadership roles. I have no line management responsibility for the women I have coached. I saw my relationship as a peer, as a woman leader who has had to grapple with issues that affect many women. I am conscious of the position of power that I occupy as the coach, building trust and empathy is critical to my work. All of the women chose to be coached by me. Two were from within the organisation where I work and the four from schools. I knew one of the women before the coaching, the others were not known to me before the coaching. Each coaching

relationship lasted for approximately nine months and took place between October 2016 and July 2018.

The writing of the fictional account is an established tool for supporting reflection; “as a method of inquiry, a way of finding about yourself and your topic” (Bolton, 2001, p5). I am positioning myself within a narrative perspective and will use “connecting approaches” (Maxwell and Miller, 2008). My analysis has produced a storied account of coaching. I am part of that story (Clandinin, 2002). The story I am telling is a fusion of the six coaching relationships. Through and from this experience I have listened for a story (Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffmann Davis, p13). This is my fictional story of Sandra, and whilst it draws upon real to life examples it does not reference any specific topic or issue explored in my coaching. The real coaching conversations are confidential to me and the six women I have coached.

The paper is divided into five sections, voice, power, relationships, authenticity and self-identity. This is a “storyline that emerges from the material” (Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffmann Davis, p12) illustrated with a coaching story. The final part of each section, is my reflexive account

The paper will conclude with a letter I have written to Sandra using the Korthagen “Onion



Model" (2004) to support this reflexive writing as I seek to get closer to knowing me, the leadership coach.

Why Helene Cixous?

Each section is prefaced with a quotation that I have selected from *The Laugh of the Medusa* (Cixous, 1976). When I began this task I had not read any of Helene Cixous' work, although I was vaguely aware of her writing through the work of a former colleague, Dr Elizabeth Hoult (2012). Cixous' work, seems to capture a number of important and powerful concepts and aligns with my starting beliefs. I found in Cixous' work a way into my story and a way to make sense of myself and the values I assign to women's authentic voices.

I. Voice

Cixous "Time and again, I, too, have felt so full of luminous torrents that I could burst ... And I, too, said nothing, showed nothing; I didn't open my mouth" (1976, p876)

"Listen to a woman speak at a public gathering (if she hasn't painfully lost her wind). She doesn't speak, she throws her trembling body forward; she lets go of herself, she flies; all of her passes into her voice. Her flesh speaks true. She lays herself bare." (1976, p881)

Sandra: *I am not quite sure what I will get from this coaching. But I do know that I need to do something, say something.*

Kerry: *I too don't know where we will go or what we will get but I see the coaching relationship as a space to talk. In a supported way, I hope. I use the GROW Model to frame the coaching conversation. Goal, Reality, Opportunity, What Next. This helps, I hope, to provide a bit of a focus? To help you?*

Sandra: *I think my goal today is not to give up! The reality is I have got all these thoughts, feelings, some very negative, swirling around in my head. It's not good for me. Actually, I have lots of really positive thoughts too. I need to make sense of where I am.*

Kerry: *Perhaps a Goal for today could be to get these thoughts and feelings out there – just me and you? Then you can decide what to do with them?*

The first meeting. How do I, as a coach, begin to create the environment to support the development of conversations which can be free? There can be freedom and no judging? Free, but with a purpose. I use my G.R.O.W. Coaching Framework to give the conversation a structure, to scaffold, but not to cage. I use echo, to support, to affirm. I use questions to seek permission from Sandra, not controlling, but sharing. I give choice to Sandra, this is her space. I do not have an agenda. I try not to have an agenda. I try to understand the fear,



her fear of letting go, of daring to say, of fearing ridicule. “When you speak as a feminist, you are identified as being too reactive, as overreacting, as if all you are doing is sensationalizing the facts of the matter” (Ahmed, 2017, p21). Dare I speak this? As I am coach, I think about how I use my voice. How do I speak with radical candour? Do I dare?

II. Power (lessness)

Cixous “Woman unthinks the unifying, regulating history that homogenizes and channels forces, herding contradictions into a single battlefield. In woman, personal history blends together with the history of all women.... As a militant, she is an integral part of all liberations... She foresees that her liberation will do more than modify power relations or toss the ball over to the other camp; she will bring about a mutation in human relations, in thought, in all praxis” (1976, p882)

Sandra: *I just cannot seem to get everything done. The list is endless. I don't feel in control. That's funny isn't it? Because I am in this leadership role now? This is what I wanted. I know I can do a great job, but I do need people to stop, well questioning me all the time. Everybody has such unrealistic expectations of me. Waiting for me to fail? I am I waiting for me to fail? I have really high expectations of myself. Can I tell people that I feel this way? I cried last week.*

As we explore the reality or the realities or the perceived realities, we can begin to make sense. Sandra off loads, that feels necessary. I try to give her the space to do this. When is the right time to move forward? Moving on; this is the whole purpose of coaching. But it feels difficult. Sandra wants to move on; I think this will happen when Sandra has some control over her limiting thoughts. I want her to recognise where these limiting thoughts come from; and then she can own them. Not letting them own her is important for me, but is this important for Sandra?

Where is my honesty? Do I share with her how I too have limiting thoughts; would this be useful? Does this support our trust with and in each other?

III. Relationship

Cixous: “Woman for women – There always remains in woman that for force which produces/is produced by the other – in particular, the other woman. In her, matrix, cradler; herself giver as her mother and child; she is her sister-daughter.... Everything will be changed once woman gives to the other woman” (1976, p881)

Sandra: *Just talking to you makes me feel so much better. I always leave these sessions better than I come in. Actually, I start to feel*

more positive on my way here, even before we start. But you are always so positive.

The relationship with Sandra is critical, by relationship I mean trust and respect, the qualities that will enable the openness. No judging, but challenge, probing, knowing how far to probe. I enjoy being with Sandra. She energises me. Today we met in a neutral place. I feel our coaching conversation is richer as it enables us both to separate ourselves from our normal work space and be ourselves; freer and not distracted. Sandra is fulsome in her positivity, what she is getting from the coaching. Do I share with her, that it helps me too? Helps me to see, by hearing, what others are experiencing.

Kerry: *Well today is our last session. I find this quite hard Sandra. You know you can always contact me to talk. So it's not the end as such!*

Closing is hard. Am I finished? Did I give Sandra a choice in this? We agreed six sessions. I will meet Sandra again, I know this. It felt that the time was right to end. As I think more, is this me in control. Taking control. Or is it about giving control. Sandra is in control. I want to think more about the end of the coaching relationship. Why is it so painful?

IV. Authenticity

<p>Cixous "We must kill the false woman who is preventing the live one from breathing" (1976, p880)</p>
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Kerry: *Wow, Sandra. That is really fantastic. You just did it. I mean, last time we talked you said that you needed this course in managing difficult conversations. Then you found it, booked it and completed it. I mean, you were so worried about what people would think about you saying that you wanted to go on this course, like they would think, hey "she's not good at managing people etc". Did you stop caring about what people thought?*

Today's space was good. Sandra is in control and not being controlled. When she commits to something, she just does it. I really admire this trait and I want her to see this in herself. I try and tell her this. This is a feature of my coaching, to highlight the strengths in ourselves. Things others see in us, but we may not see in ourselves. Then I turn the lens on myself. Not sure if I like what I see. Do I see my strength?

I see how she is using our coaching session to actualise a to-do list. It is her to do list. If she doesn't do it, I am not judging. Maybe it wasn't the right time, or now the to-do list is



different. I do not want my coaching to be ambushed by performativity systems and ways of being. These are so normalised in our professional lives, that we may have stopped noticing them in the way we talk about outcomes, measurement, targets. As a coach, how can I be sure that I am not just being part of that way of being? I need to reflect more on my Coaching Model (GROW); is this implicitly a performance driven model? What might an alternative look like? What does a feminist coaching model look like? Is it different? These are important questions, as I search for myself, the leadership coach.

V. Self-identity

Cixous: And I, too, said nothing, showed nothing; I didn't open my mouth. I didn't repaint my half of the world. I was ashamed. I was afraid, and I swallowed my shame and my fear. I said to myself: You are mad!" (1976, p876)

Sandra: *It's like no one feels like this and has all this stuff, but everyone feels like this and has all this stuff. Why do we have to pretend that the house, the family, the children, my Dad who is ill, the car that fails it MOT, the parking ticket, the PE kit that's not been washed .. all this stuff does happen to other people. Then I am presenting to the Governors and having to be all confident and pretend that I am not thinking about how the kids are going to manage tea without me.*

Kerry: *Can you just acknowledge it, say it?*

Sorry, my Dad's very ill and I will leave early today to go and see his consultant. What are you saying to others by denying the reality of our lives? What are you saying to others when you acknowledge we all have lives to live? What are we saying to other women who may have these caring roles?

These are the phenomena which impact on our lives as women (and men) in leadership roles. The other parts of our lives. They are not parts, they are our life. How do we manage the parts?

Is managing the parts more of a responsibility or burden for women? I do believe that these are the unspoken additional burdens for women. Juggling is normalised. But the guilt is normalised too. The not talking about this is normalised too, or rather, the super women hero worshipping, the women who have it all and do it all. Normalised. The development of skills to manage the parts – the caring, the domestic, these life parts are normalised. Women looking up at women leaders are expectant, the women leader will understand, surely she will say enough. Women leaders looking across and down, are thinking, dare I speak out? Do I dare acknowledge the parts of my life which need my attention? We have a choice, or do we? Can we speak out? If we, as women leaders, can be honest, can we bring

about a change in these dominant constructs of leadership? I am asking Sandra to be a change agent. But am I being fair?

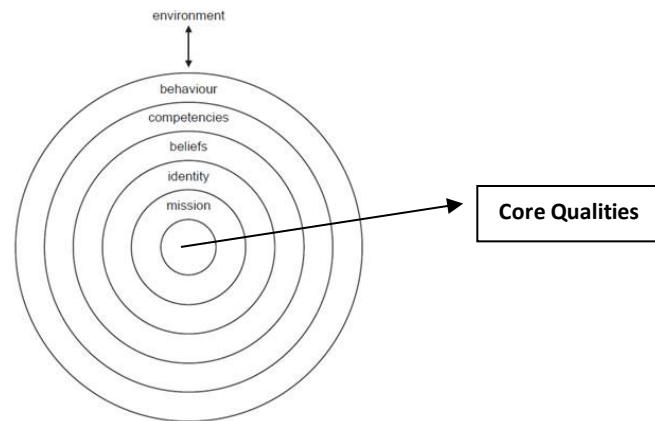
Conclusion: Who am I, the Leadership Coach?

Supporting the reflexive process

To support my concluding reflexive writing, I am using Korthagen's Onion Model (2004)". Whilst the answers to the following questions are embedded in my paper, I am using the conclusion to revisit and make explicit my core qualities by going through the layers of reflection.

I do this in my letter to Sandra.

- What do I encounter in the coaching? (Environment)
- What do I do and say? (Behaviour)
- What skills to I use? (Competences)
- What are my beliefs that are evident in the situation? (Beliefs)
- Who am I in the Coaching? (Identity)
- What is my inspiration and motivation (Mission)
- What are my core qualities? (Core Qualities)



Dear Sandra

I hope that you are well and things at home, with the family and at work are all good? It's been a few months since we last talked but I haven't stopped reflecting on our coaching conversations and who I am, the leadership coach. Through the coaching I grow too, this growth is continual, each new experience, I see myself in a different, a new way, not fixed but changing (Goodson, 1998). I have tried to capture my thinking at this moment in this letter and wanted to share this with you. I have shared some of my reading too; you always wanted to read more. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter 😊

What I encounter in my coaching of women are different stories with a common thread. What I heard in your story felt like my story, or the story of so many women. But then I

ask myself am I looking for that story or for any story? What do I hear? You talk about feeling overwhelmed, that you are not enough, an imposter, unworthy of the role, you want to speak out but are fearful of the consequences; well, I could empathise with all of that, as do the other women I coach.

What I try to do as a coach is listen to your story. I do share my own story. I believe that this builds trust. I want you to understand; I understand because your story resonates with my lived experiences. Marianne Coleman (2011) talks about “fearlessness” - taking risks, daring and finding confidence to believe (p49). I saw this in you. In fact, I see it in all of us. But it is hard to find our fearless self and hard to enact this.

I want to be empathetic without being patronising or condescending. I want to use my coaching skills to help you visualise something different. As a coach I want to create a space, a space to speak, a safe space where there is no judgement, but challenge. This is not a comfortable place, but a place to explore. As leaders we are used to challenge. This is growth challenge. For me this is about challenging mainstream (malestream) heroic leadership models. There are alternatives to “managing like a man” (Fitzgerald, 2014)

I believe that I am a good coach and I will become a better coach because of my

learning. You enthused about our meetings, you told me that they made you feel stronger, that they helped you focus. The conversations weren’t comfortable, for either of us, but they were empowering. Through the coaching, I hope that you were able to connect with that bit of yourself, which may have got a bit lost; reconnect with your strength. You are a highly skilled and knowledgeable practitioner. I have sought to support you by my questioning, to help you make sense of leadership as practice. Whilst aspiring to stay true to ourselves we do need to recognise how we are pulled and understand why this is happening (Woods, 2007). That isn’t to deny or downplay the stuff that gets in our ways, sometimes its messy and sometimes we cannot be who we want to be. Leadership is always in a context.

I wanted you to know me, to know how I see the world and how this informs the choices I make, “listening, selecting, interpreting and composing the story” (Lawrence-Lightfoot, p13). I see the world through my feminist lens. I want to be disruptive. I am trying to see the world differently. Through my questioning, I want you to suspend what you think you know (Foucault, 1972) and I want you to dare to think differently (Ahmed, 2017). The questions I ask of myself and the questions I put to you, were to help us imagine the world differently and then imagine what we would need to do to change

this world. As I think about my own life, I disrupted the life trajectory that was expected of me and have exceeded my family's expectations. The first (and only child) to go to University, to become a leader, first in a school and then in Higher Education. But there is a "but", always a "but". This "but" is the barrier to self-fulfilment, to achieving our potential

As I now reflect on "who I am, the leadership coach"; I feel able to articulate my core beliefs. What I ask, all I seek, is that we talk? Nothing is taboo. I tried to let you see that the things you were often anxious about were, well, normal. Normal in the sense that everyone, if they are really honest, face difficulties. But the reasons we cannot speak openly about these things are complex. It is through my feminist lens that I see or try to make sense of these difficulties of not talking. I want coaching to be a place to find our voice, our true authentic voices, honesty.

This letter is going to end with an incident, a critical incident, this is about me and how I grapple with and try to make sense of leadership. This incident has left me questioning my authenticity and it left me

thinking about being a living contradiction (Whitehead, 1989). Today (17 August) I had a meeting with senior (male) manager in my University about a particular problem. With a degree of irony, I reflected before and after the meeting about my voice. Prior to the meeting I had been feeling very anxious about this meeting; the night before I didn't sleep. I was nervous. Whilst I did not feel personally responsible for the specific issue that is now having to be managed, I felt that I was being held to account, or at least it was not explicitly said "Kerry, sorry, you have are caught in the cross-fire here" (my perspective). Equally, I did not say "are you blaming me for this?" I saw this car crash coming and the car crashed. I could say "I told you so", but I didn't say anything. Was my voice suppressed or did I intentionally choose not to speak? I am left trying to make sense of how I can use my leadership to speak truth to power and how this impacts on my leadership coaching.

Perhaps we can meet up for a coffee and chat some about this incident? I would really value that.

Kerry

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An A – Z of NQT induction

A Thinkpiece Working Paper by Lisa Pettifer

Every September, our NQTs arrive full of trepidation, yes, but also full of up-to-date subject knowledge, recent experience of other settings and a new, but possibly fragile, commitment to teaching— let's make sure our school provision and induction arrangements value these new starters and their qualities throughout their NQT year.

Time and again we hear of widely varying NQT experiences, from those who have joined departments or schools with active and effective support protocols and CPD practices, to those who have been treated neglectfully by the people or systems around them. What can we do to make sure we don't throw away all the potential NQTs offer?

A - Z of NQT induction

A address issues as they arise - a little guidance and advice, offered regularly from the sidelines, is more likely to be accepted as a normal and constructive part of the relationship between NQT and team leader, than a once in a while focus on a serious

problem which might have more emotional strain attached. Also, allow time for messages to sink in, and review regularly through informal chats as well as formal meetings.

B book appointments in advance - make regular discussions part of the mentoring process. Doing this allows time to talk and for the NQT to mull over some ideas, raise an issue, or respond to a target, before the scheduled appointment. Committing to a time and place sends a message that this time is important. Also, in your own 'schedule', build in time to allow for the unexpected.

C class management induction - support and guidance, and clarity of expectations for all parties, will never be wasted here. With each new recruit, you'll need a different balance of each. Beware the honeymoon period. Keep an ear to the ground and check with your NQT and other colleagues - is your new recruit coping OK after the start of term dust has settled? Were you aware of any issues from the training period? Better to follow up sooner rather than later. Chat to key form tutors to see if any informal feedback has



been offered by pupils. Make sure the NQT is fully aware of the school's systems as well as the extent of their own responsibility.

D departmental routines might be second nature to you, but can seem overwhelming to the new starter. Make sure key events, are flagged well in advance. When the NQT doesn't know what they don't know, they may easily miss an event on the calendar that seems really clearly signalled to you - repeat key dates and messages: details are easily lost in discussion.

E ebb and flow - the workload of a teacher is often irregular. Encourage your mentee to plan ahead for the busy times so as not to overload themselves.

F follow up any niggles, from your NQT, pupils, other staff, parents - misunderstandings need to be unraveled and a relationship built on finding solutions sets the tone for future development.

G go the extra mile for your NQT, if it seems appropriate. You won't want to hold their hand and encourage them to be dependent on you - but at the same time, they are looking to you to assist them in completing

their professional training - and they are entitled to your support. Part of your position is to develop others, remember.

H home life is important to all of us - be aware of any particular issues that might affect a new starter's settling-in.

I information - make sure data, important internal documents, online forum membership details, usernames and passwords are shared. Leaving your NQT in a position of ignorance is unfair.

J jointly prepare and plan - if you're not sure about an NQT's confidence in the classroom, build some shared planning into your meetings. You'll want to keep an eye on the 'quality control' within your department/phase anyway. I've known Heads of Department meet NQTs each day after the last lesson to discuss outlines for the following lessons - in so doing, you're scaffolding and modelling your expectations, and you'll soon see when you can reduce the time needed to oversee.

K knowledge development is so important to teacher development and an expectation that the newcomer will continue to work on their



subject knowledge and signature pedagogies is essential. Even in the early days, you might be discussing what the NQT might be teaching the next term or next year, and what they will need to develop in the meantime.

L listen to what the NQT doesn't say, as much as to what they do. Did you notice that when discussing their classes, they avoided mentioning that year 10 class? Did you wonder why..?

M merge, match and mentor - coordinating a team is about finding the right combinations of individuals for specific projects. Try to match up your NQT with a suitable buddy for part of a key project.

N new developments happen all the time but NQTs don't yet realise this. Being able to support the team through change from whatever starting point or focus they currently have is all part of steering the team in the long-term.

O observations need to be arranged, in as many forms as possible. Enable the NQT to observe other teachers in the department and around the school - they need to see what the standards and routines are. It would be unfair

to judge them on these expectations without giving them these opportunities first.

P pressures come from all angles - and the newcomer can't always separate the major from the minor - encourage some perspective through humour, shared experiences and discussion with a range of mentor figures.

Q question your NQT all the time - you're the leader and there's a lot about the day to day work of your team that you need to know about. Set the expectation that you'll be asking about homework, test results, behaviour, etc - from here, it's easier to mould and shape rather than acting retrospectively after a formal review, observation or intervention.

R reporting to your Local Authority or other appropriate body needs to be timely and accurate. Ensure that you've planned your own time in terms of observation, feedback, review, data collection, etc, so that you're properly informed at key points in the year. Give your NQT the opportunity to address any areas of weakness in good time for new practice to become properly established and embedded, rather than just featuring as a tick-box exercise.



S share your anecdotes, disaster stories and worries - your whole team, and your NQTs in particular, need to see that mistakes can be rectified, and barriers overcome.

T timing – gradually aim to increase the challenge and independence experienced by the NQT. Share your thoughts with them, and encourage them to plan their stages of development with you.

U understand that the NQT's field of vision is not the same as yours - some NQTs can barely see to the end of the lesson, never mind the end of the day, week or term - if there are worries about their performance, you'd hope to have been alerted to this by the ITT tutors, but if this isn't the case, you might need to contact them to ask for more information about how to support your NQT.

V variety of input - experienced mentors draw on a broad range of strategies to help the development of NQTs: other colleagues, internal INSET, external training such as through the LA, your academy group, Teaching School or other partnerships; printed materials, podcasts, videos and internet sources - knowing which to offer when is part of your getting to know your mentee.

W wishing they were different ain't gonna make it so - once appointed, this teacher is in charge of the education of children. Make sure your interventions and supports keep this as the main focus.

X x-ray vision, 6th sense, 2nd sight, intuition, radar, call it what you will - if you get 'that feeling' that something's not right, it's best to check it out.

Y you - mentoring an NQT can be a great pleasure and privilege. It can also be draining, frustrating and time-consuming. Pass any serious concerns to your line manager and look after yourself when it comes to work-life balance and how you show your team that you're coping.

Z zoo, zither, zinnia and zumba - we all love our treats, so a little gesture of appreciation once in a while, a little act of kindness, even something as simple as stepping in with photocopying on a really busy morning, making the coffees or leaving a Ferrero Rocher on the desk just says 'I know what it's like' - and that might be all it takes to give a boost to a new starter looking for a little reassurance.



There is much talk of a recruitment and retention crisis in teaching, so it's best that we make the most of the teachers we've got. Remember that an NQT is not the finished

article and we owe our new colleagues a duty of care. Strong NQT provision creates the best foundation for a fulfilling and valuable career as a teacher - and isn't that what we all want?

This piece originated as a discussion piece for SLEs, ITT and NQT mentors and a team of professional tutors (teachers with TLRs for mentoring and CPD) working in secondary schools in Cumbria, and was produced on a personal blog
<https://lisa7pettifer.wordpress.com/2016/09/05/a-z-of-nqt-induction/>

Multiplicities and Transformations:
Re-imagining coaching for a posthuman world

A Thinkpiece Working Paper by Kay Sidebottom

'We are at the dead-end of humanism... and now, together, we have to burrow in other directions.' (Snaza et al, 2014, p.52)

As a firm believer in affirmative ethics and a relentlessly hopeful educator, it feels uncomfortable to begin this piece with a negative view of the world. Yet there's no doubt that we live in troubling times. Issues such as environmental degradation, mass migration, climate change, species extinction, increasing technological mediation, widening equality gaps, precarity, and overt and violent racism and extremism comprise just some of the global challenges facing the planet as it enters the anthropocene. Humanity - and its associated philosophies of humanism - just doesn't appear to be working.

At a more micro level, we are seeing the damaging nature of capitalism and neo-liberalist systems playing out in our current educational spaces of performativity, managerialism, academic capitalism and reductionist thinking which render the act of teaching (across all levels and sectors) challenging and schizophrenic. Given these complex, uncertain, and frankly dangerous times, can coaching truly offer much-needed

liberating spaces for individual transformation and liberation? Or does the coaching process itself need reframing in the light of our move to anthropocentric times?

Several years ago I started to explore critical posthuman theory as an approach to re-imagining and re-thinking education.

Posthumanism is complex and resists clear definitions; it is better seen, in the words of Rosi Braidotti as 'a navigational tool through which to read the world' (Braidotti, 2012).

Posthumanism is not about robots, artificial intelligence, cyborgs and virtual reality, although it does incorporate recognition and ethical consideration of these technological developments. Its key principles can be summed up as follows:

1. Posthumanism critiques and de-centres the Enlightenment ideal of 'Man' as the universal representation of the human (think of Leonardo da Vinci's 'Vitruvian Man'; the pristine white, male, European, physically-able definition of humanity). Those who do not fit this ideal (that is to say, most of us) have been 'othered' over time, and viewed as less than human. This

way of thinking calls into question our frameworks for thinking about the world and who is valued; particularly relevant in education.

2. Posthumanism resists dualisms – for example the suggestion that the brain is in some way separate from the body and can be taught, or healed (or in this context, coached) without consideration of the embodied nature of the learning. Acceptance of complexity and uncertainty trouble the lazy tendency to accept dualist and linear notions of ‘bad’ or ‘good’ behaviour, or the binary idea of ‘progressive’ versus ‘traditional’ education.’
3. Posthumanism encourages an awareness of the agency of material and non-human agents and the potential effect of these ‘things’ on our being in the world (Bennett, 2010). (In an education context these things might include buildings, furniture, technological devices, canteen food, clothing and pets).
4. Posthumanism accepts that we are technologically mediated – in all senses – not only by our omni-present smartphones but also by items such as prosthetics, glasses/hearing aids and

other augmenting devices, medicines and drugs.

For the purposes of this article I am defining coaching as a human-centred intervention aimed at learning, growth, personal challenge and development. The human-centred aspect in itself clearly presents a challenge within the posthuman ontological framework described above – but also offers an exciting opportunity to open up new spaces for thinking differently about education and re-imagining future education worlds to come.

So, if we accept the principles outlined above, what might that mean for the posthumanist coach? The following statements and questions offer a starting point, or provocation for thinking differently about what it means to coach, and be coached in the world today.

A posthuman coach...

...starts by questioning and problematizing the origins of their own coaching methods; mapping the genealogy of the theories underpinning their approach.

(This is important as it allows exploration of standpoint and ideology. Is your theory rooted in those Enlightenment ideas of what it means



to be human? What other models might there be, that offer new ways, or draw on other lived experiences, to view the world?)

...recognises that we are not independently constructed individuals.

*(Any goals or outcomes therefore need to be seen in the light of humans as multiplicities and assemblages, affected by others (both human and non-human). Who, and - just as importantly - **what** else form the 'assemblages' which influence the coachee's current situation?)*

...emphasises the relational nature of the coaching relationship.

(The coach cannot be neutral and objective, entangled and embedded as they are in the coaching process. The generative process of shared coach-coachee dialogue can be seen as vital, and an output in its own right; as David Bohm (in Isaacs, 1999, p.578) states "Dialogue ... is a conversation with a center, not sides. It is a way of taking the energy of our differences and channelling it toward something that has never been created before.")

...takes account of the agency of the non-human.

(And therefore encourages the coachee to consider the intra-action and inter-play of

material agents such as buildings, furniture, technology) on their issues and experiences.)

...brings the body back in.

(Remembering that we are embodied subjects, not abstract brains which can be programmed into thinking and acting differently; and paying attention to comments concerning physical reactions to space and matter).

...are not tied to the rigour of coaching systems or processes, but rather allow space for experimentation and creativity.

(Taking on board the maxim that 'art is a thing that does' (Hlavajova, 2015), creative re-imaginings of situations through art, poetry, photography or other means can become a key part of coaching practice).

By using posthuman thinking as a navigational tool, we can begin to explore the truly liberating nature of coaching and its potentialities for creative and playful experimentation. Rather than constructing or achieving new ways of being (for the benefit of ourselves or our organisations)

'...posthumanist ontologies configure pedagogical practice of convergences of flows and intensities; a mutual contagion between human... and nonhuman entities moving and

traversing different sides of the learning process forming momentary, unstable learning assemblages within a varying specter of world-forming and world-affecting potentialities.' (Pederson, no date).

Perhaps these new coaching frames of reference might just offer the best way to address and embrace our messy, complex and entangled journeys in 'becoming teacher.'

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Reimagining staff appraisal: trialling a collaborative approach to school-based professional learning

A Research Working Paper by Owen Carter, Babak Somekh, and Gary Handforth

Abstract

Traditional approaches to appraisal in schools often rely on 1:1 meetings, with staff objectives worked on in isolation from the wider school community. Here we discuss a model for collaborative professional learning, which encourages mutual rather than hierarchical accountability for professional development through the appraisal process.

A co-produced project between ImpactEd, Bright Futures Educational Trust and Leeds Beckett University, the research focused on trialling a collaborative coaching model for appraisal of support staff, involving over 100 Key Workers, Lunchtime Organisers and Teaching Assistants across 3 primary schools.

A qualitative analysis combined semi-structured interviews, observations and professional reflection, alongside quantitative analysis of validated questionnaires relating to sense of community and associated psychological traits.

Evaluation results indicate a positive impact on support staff's engagement with the

school community and dispositions to collaboration. This includes both statistically significant increases on a range of self-report measures and findings from thematic analysis of interviews and observations. These findings provide early support for trialling collaborative and coaching-based methods for appraisal and professional learning across additional schools and with a range of other staff roles.

Introduction

The project aimed to weave group coaching into the support staff appraisal process, using collaborative coaching methods to encourage joint practice development rather than individual 'performance management'. As a partnership between ImpactEd and Bright Futures Educational Trust (BFET), the project arose from a desire to consider if there could be a better way for developing and applying a more collaborative process and group



learning opportunity to performance management.

The proposed new approach to appraisal took an explicitly collaborative approach to formulating objectives, that would encourage staff to think about their role and responsibilities within the wider school community, and how their relationships with others within that community relate to common goals (c.f. Archer, 2015). (For further detail on the approach, refer to Handforth, 2018).

Running from late 2017 onwards, the project was conducted with several different groups of the support staff community, the main roles involved being Lunchtime Organisers, Teaching Assistants, Key Workers and Learning Mentors. For all of these, the basic process has been working through a combination of paired and small group

appraisal sessions over the course of the academic year, with some differentiation and personalisation based on roles and experience.

The series of group appraisal sessions began with reflection on the School Development Plan and where this might relate to individual objectives or focuses. Staff then had time to reflect on their own personal and professional development priorities and take part in facilitated discussions about how they may be able to support each other in pursuing these. From the early sessions, collective objectives for these groups were also agreed, typically structured with a focus on outcomes for pupils (whether behavioural, social or academic). Since then, these groups met several times to review progress and share lessons learned, outlined as a high-level sketch in the following figures:

Fig. 1. High-level structure of appraisal process

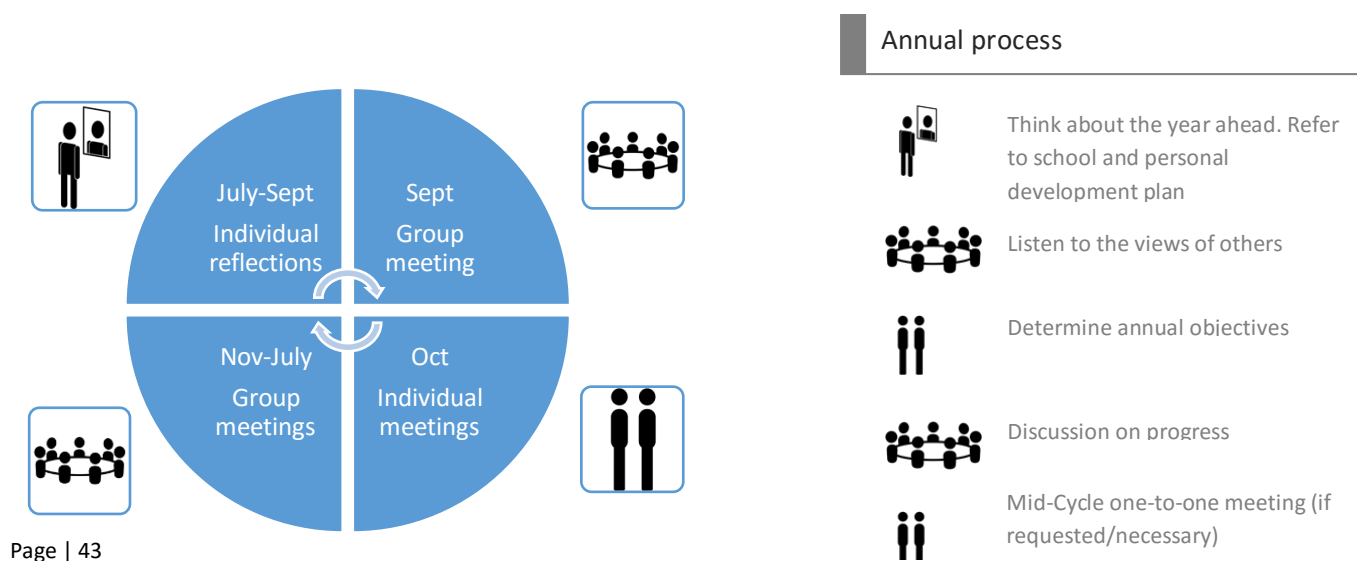
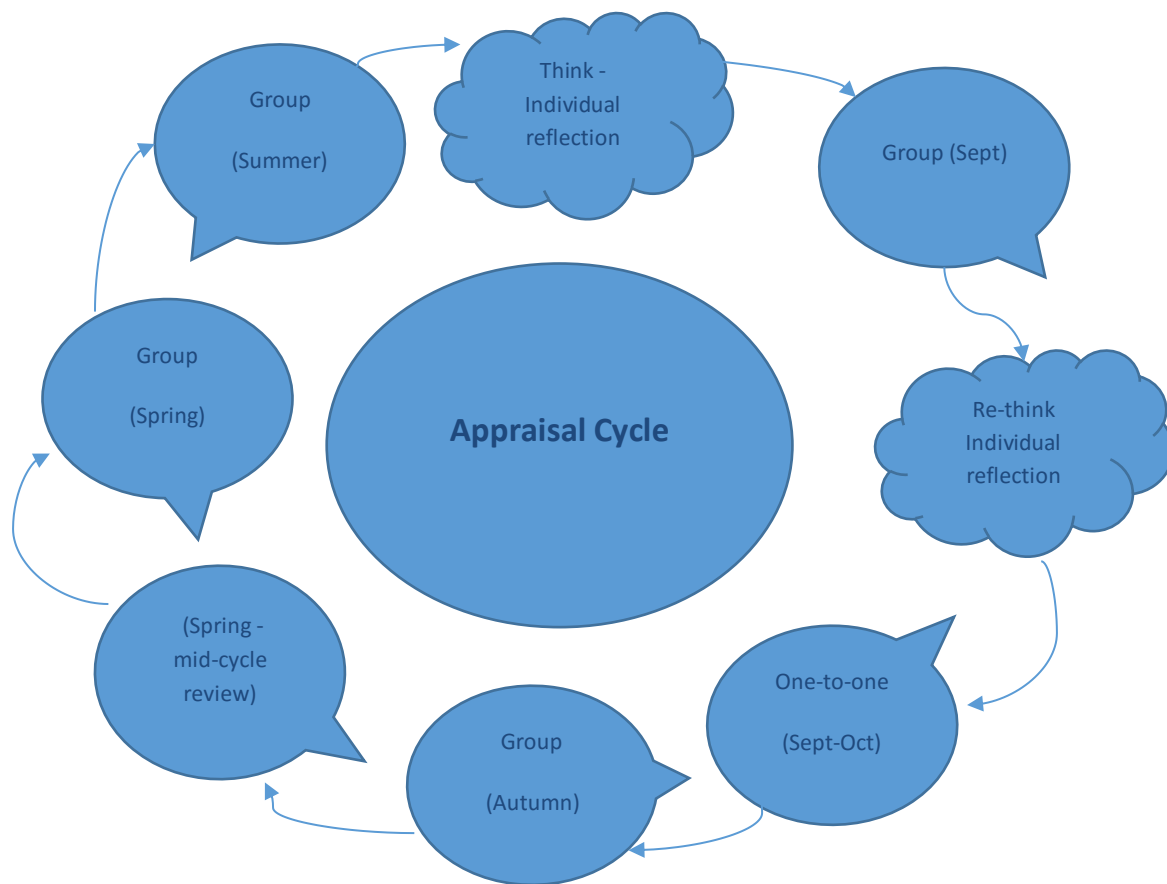


Fig. 2. Detailed meeting structure and approximate timelines



Background to the research project

The research element of the project operated as a collaboration between [ImpactEd](#), a not-for-profit organisation supporting schools in evaluating their impact, [BFET](#), a Multi-Academy Trust, with three primary schools participating in the project (Marton, Rushbrook and Stanley Grove primary academies) and [Leeds Beckett University](#) and the [CollectivED](#) network.

The project began by considering some of the dimensions of effective coaching, drawing on

guidance materials offered by NCTL and CfBT, CUREE's framework for mentoring and coaching (CUREE, 2005) and systematic reviews on professional development in schools, including the work of Helen Timperley and the Teacher Development Trust's Developing Great Teaching (Cordingley, 2005).

Driven by BFET's commitment to reflective practice and practitioner inquiry, the approach was also influenced by the work of Donald Schon and Lave and Wenger on situating learning within everyday practices.

The initial review suggested a number of other reasons to specifically focus on collaborative coaching, including the possibility of fostering a shared sense of community among staff (McMillan and Chavis, 1986), which in turn may support networks, staff well-being and commitment towards common goals (Bruffee, 1993). Further parallels were found in the work of Andy Hargreaves on collaborative professionalism (Hargreaves, 2018).

This project was intended to provide proof of concept for this approach to staff development, beginning with support staff and, if successful, rolled out with senior and middle leaders and other teaching staff and providing a model that could be proactively shared with other schools.

Research questions

The core theme of the research project was how individual professional development relates to staff's collective sense of efficacy and engagement (and broader school development priorities). The key research question that organised the activity was:

'How does participation in a collaborative coaching form of appraisal affect support

staff's attitudes towards the school community and their role in it?'

Underneath this, a number of additional questions informed the project:

- How effective is the approach in bridging gaps between individual staff learning and school development priorities?
- Is this collective approach to appraisal perceived by participants and school leaders as more or less effective than traditional one-to-one conversations?
- To what extent is the approach developed throughout the project scalable and sustainable?

These were live issues for a number of reasons:

- In general across the school system, support staff are often comparatively neglected in terms of professional learning opportunities, and the term 'appraisal' often comes with negative connotations. This project offered an opportunity to change that narrative.
- If this approach were successful in the context of support staff, it may establish a model which could be deployed in other schools across the Trust, and with leaders and teaching staff.

- The project offered an opportunity to apply a robust approach to measuring the impact of collaborative in-school activities and so contribute to the broader evidence base.

Methods

The impact of the collaborative appraisal approach was measured through two main strands.

1. Quantitatively through pre/post design using validated questionnaires. Support staff responded anonymously to a range of validated assessment measures relating to the following constructs, before and after the appraisal period. Measures being used are the Big Five Inventory and Sense of Community Index (John, 1991; McMillan and Chavis, 1986).

Construct	Rationale
Conscientiousness	Positively related to locus of control, sense of empowerment, workplace achievement. Links to reflective practice.
Openness	More engaged staff are likely to be more open to experience. Links to reflective practice.
Extraversion	Relates to sociability and communication in groups.
Agreeableness	Relates to levels of trust and tendencies towards cooperation.
Neuroticism	Lower levels may indicate happier staff. Lower levels of neuroticism are correlated with higher levels of empowerment/locus of control
Sense of community	Explicitly addresses staff engagement in a community and sense of shared purpose.

Data was generally normally distributed and so paired sample t-tests were used as the standard method to analyse changes between pre- and post- questionnaires. On some datasets Wilcoxon signed-rank tests were also used as a non-parametric measure and findings were consistent between the two measures. Given that no control groups were used for the project (all support staff in the schools were participating), findings do not necessarily show causal relations, but do indicate correlational relationships.

2. Qualitative research activities including observations, a range of semi-structured interviews and practitioner self-reflections, as well as informal feedback from managers and school leaders. The data from these activities was analysed thematically and used alongside questionnaire data to analyse the evolution of activities and staff perceptions over time. This data included reflections and feedback from all the key staff groups represented in the project – comprising leaders and managers as well as the support staff involved.

Findings

Quantitative outcomes

Across the 3 schools, we were able to gather matched pre- and post- questionnaire results for the following staff groups:

- Key Workers (N=17)
- Lunchtime Organisers (N=23)
- Teaching Assistants (N=18)
- Middle Leaders (N=11)

Taking the group as a whole, we observed statistically significant increases in:

- Sense of community (p=0.004)
- Openness (p=0.02)

And a statistically significant decrease in:

- Neuroticism (p=0.02)

In addition, non-significant increases were observed in:

- Extraversion (p=0.16)
- Conscientiousness (p=0.18)
- Agreeableness (p=0.06)

These results indicate, over the duration of the study, a greater sense of engagement with the school community, higher levels of openness to experience and collaboration, and greater levels of emotional stability.

Fig. 3. Mean, standard error and confidence intervals for all variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Err.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
socpre	3.116812	.062547	2.992001	3.241622
socpost	3.237536	.0621158	3.113586	3.361486
extrapre	3.627536	.0668237	3.494192	3.760881
extrapost	3.687246	.0673063	3.552939	3.821554
openpre	3.517391	.0629604	3.391756	3.643027
openpost	3.627536	.060047	3.507714	3.747358
conspre	4.325072	.0588098	4.207719	4.442426
conspost	4.36913	.0598658	4.24967	4.488591
agreepre	4.473188	.0537996	4.365833	4.580544
agreepost	4.546377	.0522062	4.442201	4.650553
neuropre	2.288551	.0866926	2.115558	2.461543
neuropost	2.174783	.0865224	2.00213	2.347435

Fig. 4. P values across role types

Role	Soc	Extra	open	Consc	Agree	Neuro (decrease)
Key worker	0.018	0.06	0.2	0.5	0.61	0.67
Lunchtime organiser	0.017	0.43	0.11	0.78	0.25	0.31
Teaching assistants	0.31	0.31	0.5	0.07	0.1	0.01
Leadership	0.39	0.08	0.02	0.04	0.01	0.01

Although breakdowns by roles should be treated with some caution given small sample sizes, the analysis does indicate that sense of community increases were significant among Key Workers and Lunchtime Organisers, but not Teaching Assistants or Leadership – however, these two groups did experience significant positive reductions in neuroticism.

All groups experienced positive changes in one or more traits, with the largest number being among leadership – perhaps a reflection of the benefits for them in playing a role as group coach, rather than appraiser, and related to positive changes among the ‘coachees’.

Qualitative outcomes

These observations have been broken down into three main categories:

- A changing view of appraisal
- A sense of professionalism
- Support and challenge

A changing view of appraisal

A theme that was clear from the beginning of the project was around a lack of common understanding of appraisal. Of thirteen support staff asked what they associated with the term ‘appraisal’, seven used the word ‘scary’. The majority of support staff had never experienced appraisal before, and it was largely associated with, in the words of one interviewee, ‘something that teachers have to do’.

In follow-up interviews with some of these participants, conducted approximately three months later, a more common sense of appraisal was beginning to emerge. Although

there was still some confusion about the word ‘appraisal’ and what it applied, the terms applied by staff to the activities they had been taking part in were now more likely to be associated with professional development, and the sense of caution had substantially diminished.

An early barrier to adopting a group coaching approach was the perception that every individual’s role was different and that there would therefore be little benefit to discussing common approaches. This was a theme that occurred multiple times across the first round of interviews and observations of the group coaching sessions.

Where this was overcome most successfully, reflections on individual pupils were used as a catalyst for discussion about the lessons that could be applied more generally. For instance, one lunchtime organiser spoke about how they had observed a pupil who often did not eat their lunch. When this occurred, the lunchtime organiser communicated this to their teacher so that they could plan ahead for any potential behavioural difficulties as a result. This story then encouraged other lunchtime organisers to share similar examples, and sparked reflections on how this could be done more consistently with other behaviours observed during lunchtime. (c.f. Mason, 2001)

A key question for the project moving forwards might be how, where such pieces of insight occur, how can they be consistently captured and shared with relevant staff across the schools. It is also worth observing that the appraisal sessions tended to take slightly different forms between schools and job roles within schools. One of the considerations will be the balance between allowing variability or adopting a standardised approach to session structure.

A sense of professionalism

In both the observed sessions and interviews, there were few barriers to taking part in the process – support staff were generally happy to engage in the activities of the sessions, even where this may have been unfamiliar territory. However, several interviewees noted that their prior experience of similar activities was often somewhat unstructured: staff were encouraged to ask for training, but this often may not be formal or have a clear follow-up. In subsequent interviews, staff noted that the regular group sessions had helped provide additional structure for identifying their professional development needs, and in some cases this had led to staff taking part in formally certified courses.

This emerging sense of professional agency is a key area that the project should aim to

develop moving forwards. The range of experience and time in post among support staff often led to substantial variance in how staff think about their professional identity. For instance, some newer lunchtime organisers would immediately answer questions about their professional development by talking solely about activities they had run, rather than their broader learning. Appraisal sessions moving forwards may want to consider opportunities for staff to articulate their strengths at the moment, and areas they are keen to develop further.

Support and challenge

Systematic reviews consistently find that the highest quality professional development approaches allow a level of open discussion and co-construction, but balanced with expert input and challenge (for instance, Cordingley, 2015).

Overall the framework offered by these sessions allowed for this balance. A key consideration is the ratio between coaches and coachees. The most successful sessions had facilitators who were able to guide discussions in small groups; where groups were very large and there was only one facilitator, this balance was harder to find.

In follow-up interviews, most participants were able to provide evidence of tangible

actions they had taken as a result of the sessions. Almost all could offer instances of something they had considered more deeply or examined their thinking on. A number of participants observed that it was actually after the group sessions that they had done their hardest thinking – building in these reminders and follow-ups for individuals generated from the group activities is therefore likely to be key for the success of the model moving forwards.

Implications

These results are highly encouraging, suggesting a positive impact across a range of inter-related areas. Immediate next steps now will be to consider how the model might work – and may differ – with other staff roles, and what a second year of the process will look like, building on lessons from the first.

Although there are a number of transferable elements to this appraisal model, there are some challenges to adopting it, ranging from the logistical to the theoretical:

- Some members of staff may be reluctant to share their areas for development in a group setting, or consider appraisal as something that has to be solely individual. Indeed, when asked about the prospect of piloting the approach with teaching

staff, several teachers expressed this concern.

- Creating the time and space for large numbers of staff members to come together can be a timetabling challenge. Where some support staff members may be paid on an hourly basis, there are also cost implications to creating extra time for development associated activities.
- Senior leaders will need to be champions of the approach, so that is closely allied to school development plans and seen as a core part of the activity of the school.

Where well embedded and staff are committed to the approach, however, the potential benefit is substantial: robust group accountability that builds rather than diminishes practitioner agency and influence, and may support higher-quality decision making. Indeed, our quantitative results suggest that the approach may also contribute towards small but significant increases in staff engagement with the school community, a more open and collaborative attitude, and greater emotional stability. That in turn may allow for a fuller understanding of the multiple factors which can support and affect pupil learning.

Ultimately, then, as well as contributing towards a more robust and joined-up means

of handling appraisal, the real potential of the model will be in how it contributes towards stronger, professional learning focused school

culture. Our work so far suggests it may well do so.

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What is supervision, how does it work in school contexts and how does it differ from coaching and mentoring?

A Research Working Paper by Penny Sturt and Jo Rowe

Supervision is a professional conversation. It is a method of offering managerial input, emotional support and enhancing professional development to staff. Widely used within health and social care it has surprised the authors that it has not been more commonly available for education staff especially in current contexts with the complexity of the demands facing schools and their students (Sturt and Rowe, 2018, Wonnacott 2014), especially as it is a statutory requirement for school staff working within the Early Years Framework (EYFS 2017 3.21).

The definition of supervision being used in our work with schools has been adapted from the work of Morrison (2005):

*“Supervision is a process by which one **member of staff** is given responsibility by the **school** to work with another staff member in order to meet certain organisational, professional and personal objectives which together promote the best outcomes for **students**. These objectives and functions are:*

1. *Competent accountable performance (managerial function)*
2. *Continuing professional development (developmental / formative function)*
3. *Personal support (supportive/restorative function)*
4. *Engaging the staff member with the school (mediation function).”* (Sturt and Rowe 2018 p.10).

This article briefly summarises an approach to supervision that has been piloted in a range of school settings. Supervision could be relevant to all staff. However, the staff in schools asking most clearly for it have been those directly involved in safeguarding roles. The advice in successive statutory guidance has been that those in designated roles safeguarding children should be offered: *“sufficient time, funding, **supervision** and support to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively”* (Working Together 2018 chapter 2 paragraph 3 emphasis added). Supervision is a method of supporting staff with the complex tasks asked of them and ensuring that good work is noticed. Supervision encourages staff to learn



from what they have done well and how they can improve, it's primarily a method for professional development based on techniques around adult learning. Its emphasis on supportive relationships between supervisor and supervisee builds an expectation that supervision is restorative, enhancing well-being and resilience. Supervision makes space for analytical reflection about the emotional impact/meaning of work and what needs to happen for students, staff, the school or others as a result.

This supervision model is based on an integration of sixteen components, the purpose of meeting (management, emotional support, mediation and professional development), who benefits (students, staff, school, stakeholders), how it is done, (the reflective cycle incorporating experience, reflection, analysis and action planning), all underpinned by a written framework that has a policy, an agreement between supervisors and supervisees, clear expectations about recording and a review process.

How does supervision differ from coaching/mentoring?

For supervision to be effective its rationale has to be understood. Supervision happens through an explicit agreement between staff members about how they are expected to

behave, the expectations of their roles and attendant responsibilities, permission to share professional issues which are perplexing or worrying them, to have good work noticed and to have a space in which these things and the tensions arising from roles and values are all talked about. Supervision therefore fits with the safeguarding and child protection policy, the Teachers' Standards, behaviour policy and codes of conduct. Knowing that there is a supervisor available to talk through concerns about students, staff or workload facilitates a *"culture of safety, equality and protection"* (WT2018) when it is possible to ask questions, check out perceptions and find solutions. The absence of such a culture has been highlighted in the chapter written by Wonnacott et al (2018) about the implications for school settings in the aftermath of abuse investigations. The importance of supervision being mandated within the school by the Senior Leadership Team cannot be understated as then staff understand their responsibilities are matched by the school's to them. Such policies should always make clear what the consequences are and the expectations of confidentiality. Supervision in our view always has an explicit task of accountability and the decisions made in supervision (including group supervision) need to be followed up by the supervisor who



shares the responsibility with their supervisee for ensuring decisions are implemented.

Coaching and mentoring use skills in building relationships with colleagues that may be components of supervision. The essential difference in supervision is the responsibility the supervisor retains for the accountability and oversight of the task that the supervisee undertakes. This process is part of the school managerial structure and is why it needs support from the policies and processes within the school. Coaching is usually focused on acquiring specific skills, it may form part of supervision or could be delegated to a colleague with the specific skills required. Mentors tend to be peers where a supportive alliance can be built from shared experiences. Coaching and mentoring offer support in learning new skills or roles but do not take the responsibility for ensuring competence, whereas that is part of the supervisor's role.

The other important role that might be relevant to supervision is that of external consultancy, where someone external to the school is used as a sounding board employing many of the techniques used in supervision for similar purposes but with the expectation that managerial accountability for their work

is retained by the person working within the organisation and is not passed over externally. Lea-Weston (2018) gives an insight into consultancy using supervisory principles. In our view supervision has to have explicit expectations around accountability and one of a supervisor's key tasks is maintaining the balance between the functions of supervision; so too close a preoccupation with emotional issues and the supervisor risks becoming a counsellor, and too much focus on management tasks and supervision's focus shifts to performance appraisal. However, consultancy using supervisory principles but with explicit agreement that the day to day management responsibilities remain with the organisation can be useful where the management chain ends (e.g. headteacher) or if there are specific issues where skilled knowledge is required.

The supervision cycle is a model adapted for use in social care by Morrison (2005), Wonnacott, (2012, 2014) from Kolb's learning cycle (Kolb 1988). Kolb's work about how adults learn draws on the essential components of sensing, feeling, thinking and doing (1988). Supervision needs to be dynamic. Effective supervisors stay alert, curious and committed to developing their staff. They are able to build and notice the

quality of relationships between them, their supervisees and students and find methods of questioning when those relationships alter. From our many years of training supervisors we recognise that the most startling realisation supervisors have is how directive they have become rather than facilitative. Performance cultures and pressures on resources, especially time, lead to supervisors making shortcuts and telling staff what to do, increasing dependence and stifling creativity, rather than facilitating them to develop autonomy. There is an art to supervisory questioning and coaching skills are very useful in the practice of supervision.

Supervision in Schools Pilot

Over the academic year 2016-2017 a pilot using supervision in schools was conducted in 5 schools in 2 neighbouring Local Authorities. The pilot involved a secondary school with pupils from Year 7 to Year 13, one special school with pupils from Reception to Year 11, a first school with pupils from Reception to Year 4, and 2 primary schools with pupils from Reception to Year 6, one of which was two separate schools; infant and junior. This provided a unique opportunity to find out how the model could be adapted to each setting.

Structure of the pilot

Schools participating in this pilot received support from us as we worked with them in developing an approach to supervision in line both with national expectations and established good safeguarding practice. To establish an evidence base of what is effective within a school environment questionnaires were completed at the beginning and end of the pilot. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL from each school was expected to attend meetings with the consultants each half term. They also agreed to offer planned supervision to staff they identified at the beginning of the academic year, either individually or in groups. The working hypothesis for the pilot was that planned meetings (supervision) might mean more effective management and support of the more vulnerable or at risk students by offering emotional support to staff working with them.

Supervision in Schools Pilot Findings

Three distinct areas emerged with regard to the importance of emotional support. Supervision gave staff permission: to look after themselves; support with emotionally

demanding roles and tasks; and increased their emotional availability to and awareness of the needs of others, both students and colleagues.

The feedback from schools included a recognition that offering staff regular supervision gave them a space to offload; it offered the chance to take notice of how staff are feeling about students and ask questions about why; and it helped staff to recognise when they need to take steps to look after themselves, including when to seek support from colleagues, whether that is within the school or outside it. In the words of one DSL, supervision *“builds resilience and energy to cope.”*

All the DSLs and staff that they supervised felt that their knowledge and skills had developed as a result of supervision. The examples they gave; better knowledge of Social Care thresholds; neglect; listening, reflection and analysis; ability to prioritise daily workload. There was a noticeable increase in confidence amongst the whole staff team in relation to safeguarding; demonstrated by earlier recognition and action, better understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and what needed recording and how to do so.

How time is prioritised effectively is an on-going challenge within schools. Before the start of the pilot, all of the DSLs identified having enough time to do supervision to be a concern. For example, one DSL stated their concern around having *“Time to conduct meaningful supervision.”* This concern was overcome by making a commitment to timetabling supervision into the school timetable at the beginning of the academic year. Supervision was timetabled in and staff were expected to adhere to it, which meant they turned up ready to use the time.

The impact of regular timetabled supervision made the safeguarding role, as one DSL feedback, *“more thoughtful, less knee-jerk.”*

Conclusion

This is an abbreviated account of using supervision in schools. A more detailed account of the findings from the pilot as well as a guide in using supervision in schools is available in our recently published book (Sturt and Rowe, 2018).

The strength of supervision done well is that it formalises the informal supportive discussions that go on every day in workplaces, clarifies accountability, stimulates creativity and



encourages professional curiosity and development. All staff involved in the pilot reported that they felt better supported in their role and with the complexities of their tasks. It was possible to avert sickness by

altering workload priorities. There was a sense of enhanced wellbeing. The staff taking part in the pilot we ran found it invaluable, one concluding “*supervision to be made a requirement not a suggestion*”.

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CollectivED Advanced Mentor Development Programme: transforming mentoring by design

A Practice Insight Working Paper by Rebecca Tickell

Working as a partnership lead for a large teacher training provider in West Yorkshire, I am primarily concerned with ensuring that the students we educate and train have the best school-based training and experience that they possibly can. It is of paramount importance that beginning teachers leaving us will have the qualities, skills and attributes they need to succeed in school or other educational settings. Ultimately, this will positively impact on their experiences and the experiences and the outcomes of pupils that they will teach. It is also imperative that they are able to enjoy their new careers, choosing to stay longer in the teaching profession which may help to turn the tide on the teacher retention and recruitment crisis we are facing in England today [4].

Mentoring in Initial Teacher Education (ITE)

In ITE, the role of the mentor is of pivotal importance in ensuring that student teachers gain appropriate, meaningful and constructive learning experiences during their school-based placements. A significant part of this workplace learning is facilitated by the mentor, who is skilfully able to provide the right blend of support and challenge, using

their expertise to create opportunities for their mentees to begin to develop their own pedagogical practices. It could be said that mentoring itself is a circumstance of work [1], so how can we provide development opportunities for our mentors, potentially improving school-based learning experiences for our student teachers, better preparing them for a career as a teacher?

I think it would be remiss of us to assume that mentors in schools have all of the skills they need to perform their role effectively, although it is important to recognise that some may be more experienced and skilled than others. Ergo, an important question to ask is can people be trained to be better mentors, or is it just an innate ability that some of us have and some of us don't? If we look to Greek mythology [11] for some inspiration, we find that Telemachus' mentor - Mentor - wasn't quite up to snuff. Luckily for Telemachus, the goddess Athena was on hand to step into the breach to provide Odysseus' son with the sagacity and timely advice he needed to complete his quest but the question remains: how could Mentor become a better mentor? We don't all have access to



Greek goddesses and divine wisdom, so is it possible?

To design and construct an effective and meaningful development programme we need to explore the roles and responsibilities of the mentor, the dynamics of the mentee-mentor relationship and how we learn. Recognising that this learning will be a two-way process with both parties gaining something from the interaction and experience, will also be central to our development programme.

In David Clutterbuck's book 'Everyone Needs a Mentor' [3], he posits that 'mentoring is primarily focused on longer term goals and developing capability', which seems to partly fulfil the role that we would expect of the mentor of a trainee teacher. We would expect the mentor to support the trainee to develop their teaching capabilities as they complete their training, attaining the long term goal of acquiring qualified teacher status (QTS) at the end of the process. However, some problems and constraints exist that are peculiar to initial teacher education and are likely to affect the efficacy of the mentoring process.

Constraints

One such constraint is that mentoring takes place over a very short block of time, in teacher training it's a matter of weeks not

years. This time constraint places considerable pressure on the mentor-mentee relationship. For example, if rapport is not established quickly it may be difficult for the mentee to 'open-up' to their mentor and reflect on their experiences honestly; to be in a position where they are comfortable enough to share vulnerabilities requires trust. This means that the effectiveness of any mentor-mentee relationship would be lessened. Quite simply, the mentee would not have the time - *in that placement, in that context* – to take the steps they need to take in order to develop their practice. Another significant barrier to the effectiveness of the mentoring process in ITE, is that some mentors do not choose to undertake the role, they are asked – or in some cases directed - to undertake it.

In the corporate world many companies are committed to providing employees with access to a mentoring scheme, appointing coordinators to match the 'right' mentor to the mentee [10]. Personnel and logistical issues, such as a limited pool of placements and mentors, presently make this untenable for any large ITE provider to pursue this approach but it may be something we could look towards considering in the future.

Another significant issue that needs to be recognised is that in ITE the mentor also plays



the role of 'judge', as we ask our mentors to assess their trainees' performance against the Teachers' Standards throughout their teaching practice. Performativity culture pervades our education system and we as a university ITE provider are not immune to it; measuring performance in this way is currently unavoidable due to the way in which we are measured as providers of teacher education by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted).

Inevitably, by asking our mentors to provide performance data we are directly affecting the mentor-mentee relationship. The effect that this will have on the effectiveness of the mentoring process is difficult to ascertain, primarily due to a lack of data and evidence in this area. The very act of surveillance itself, be it overt or covert, will also influence the dynamics and power differential within the mentor-mentee relationship.

Development as an educative process

I see development as an educative process and in this respect, mentor development is no different. The learner – in this case the mentor – is not a *tabula rasa* (blank slate), they bring with them past experiences, melded by socio-economic, societal and

cultural factors, which in turn informs their epistemologies and experience of the world through their lens, guiding their learning.

How do we learn? If development is educative, any development programme worth its salt must surely have learning at its heart. Unsurprisingly, there is no clear answer to this question and there are many contrasting viewpoints, from cognitivist: in that a learner is actively involved in the learning process; to constructivist: the learner is more than just a processor of information, albeit an active one, learners construct *meaning* itself. Ertmer and Newby [5] propose that the role of an instructional designer advocating a constructivist approach to designing a development programme, is to provide instruction on 'how to construct meaning' and 'to align and design experiences for the learner so that authentic, relevant contexts can be experienced.' As such, I see clear advantages of adopting such an approach for essentially a workplace development programme.

Learning is complex and nuanced, in my experience adult learning is no different. Andragogy*, or adult learning theory, was first proposed by Malcolm Knowles in the early 1970's. The core principles of andragogy [7] are:

- learners need to know ('why', 'what' and 'how');
- self-concept of the learner; prior experience of the learner;
- readiness to learn;
- orientation to learning and motivation to learn.

Knowles proposes that 'andragogy works best in practice when it is adapted to fit the uniqueness of the learners and the learning situation.'

Consideration of these principles and an awareness of the myriad of contextual and cultural differences experienced and encountered by mentors in school settings, is of fundamental importance when designing any adult development programme. As such, we have designed our programme to accommodate this and it affords mentors the opportunity to develop according to their needs and context, viewing learning as a contextualised process of the mentor constructing knowledge and meaning for themselves rather than just acquiring it.

**It is important to note there is much debate as to whether the process of learning for children and adults actually differs at all, with attempts to codify learning in this way considered by some to be futile. In my mind there is scant evidence available to support that there is a real and tangible difference,*

however, I believe that the core principles of andragogy are still worth exploring further.

In 1984 David Kolb, a prominent American educational theorist, proposed that experience is the source of adult learning and development. He proposed a model and provided a clear exposition of his theory in his highly influential and seminal work

'Experiential Learning: Experience as the source of learning and development' [8]. In Kolb's model, the cycle starts with a concrete experience i.e. the individual's learning starts with participation, it is an active process. By doing, reflecting and making sense of what has happened, an individual can consider how they can put what they have learnt into practice. In other words, they will be able to plan the actions they need to utilise and potentially benefit from their learning.

Again - as with Knowles' adult learning theory – it is important to recognise that Kolb's work is not without its critics. People are not automatons, their behaviour does not always neatly fit into boxes; stages in the learning cycle can be skipped, reversed or repeated. There is a limited evidence base to support this theory and there are significant problems with the methodology used. Also, much new, exciting and relevant research has been and is being undertaken since 1984, particularly in the field of neuroscience. With this work

linking directly to how learning happens, it would be remiss of any teacher educator to ignore it, we must take into account and acknowledge that experiential learning isn't the only way in which we learn.

What does this mean for us: can we, or should we use this? Is it so far from the truth to postulate human beings learn from experience? Personally, I think not and there is innumerable evidence that demonstrates that we do. Therefore, in our development programme the central tenet of experience will be used to support a process of dialogic reflection leading to learning and development. Lofthouse (2018) suggests that by offering mentors a space and structure in which to do this allows us to re-imagine mentoring 'as a dynamic hub within a practice development-led model for individual professional learning and institutional growth' and that 'acting on this conceptualisation would allow mentors, trainees and other supporting teacher educators to contribute to the transformation of professional learning practices and educational contexts.' [9]

Skills

I would propose that the *process* of developing one's skills as a mentor is no different to that of a trainee developing their skills as a teacher. Both parties are learning and developing through direct experience, so

being able to provide mentors with a space - or opportunity - where they can unpack their learning is of fundamental importance.

What skills do we need our mentors to have - is the DfE's National Mentor Standards for ITT (2016) comprehensive enough or even specific enough to suit our needs? The European Mentoring and Coaching Council has produced a useful competency framework [6] which suggests that mentors need to demonstrate competence in eight categories in order to be effective. In terms of ITE and our development programme, the categories most pertinent to us are: understanding self, commitment to self-development, building the relationship, enabling insight and learning and evaluation. We will draw on these as a source of reference as we build and develop our programme over time.

What next?

We are committing a significant amount of resource, in terms of time and expertise, to offer a development programme to improve the quality of mentoring across our ITE partnership, so it would be foolish for us not to finish with possibly the most important question of all - is the mentor the biggest influence on the student teacher's professional development? Billett (2013) suggests that engaging with a more expert partner – a mentor – is only one part of their

learning process and that ‘the other is the degree by which workers are interested in, motivated by and able to intentionally learn through these engagements.’ [2] This could also be surmised by the well-known adage ‘You can guide a horse to water but you can’t make it drink’ (Anon).

As I sit here writing this piece, I am unable to speculate as to how effective or beneficial this development programme will be for our mentors and their mentees, of course I have high hopes and expectations. I will reflect on and evaluate its effectiveness throughout the year and come back to this piece of writing to share my reflections with you at the end of process.

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A continuum of Lesson Study focus

A Research and Practice Insight Working Paper by John Mynott

Lesson Study (LS) suffers from being misunderstood and this means its definition, practice and discussion can be distorted (Seleznyov, 2018; Godfrey, Seleznyov, Anders, Wollaston & Barrera-Pedemonte, 2018; Wood, 2018) into something quite different from what another LS practitioner might see LS to be. As a result, we now have a growing number of authors talking about LS and while the discussions are interesting, it can be difficult to identify which precise variation of LS they are discussing. For me, this is a significant challenge, as my research focuses on how participant interaction occurs to enable participant learning and how these interactions affect participant learning outcomes. Without attempting to establish clearer definitions of LS it is difficult to see if another piece of research uses the same model of LS. Therefore, we risk causing confusion and harm to LS research if we do not define our concepts of LS more clearly. For it is possible and probable that a dilution and variation of LS will impact on LS

outcomes, but also if LS continues to be misunderstood it might never fully embed into our educational structure. Therefore, this paper aims to provide some clarity and considers the definition of a continuum of LS types, ordered by LS focus.

1. A Continuum of Lesson Study

There is a continuum for the foci of LS and clearer definitions of this LS typology will facilitate a richer and clearer dialogue about LS. Figure 1, visualises the continuum of LS types. While other variations exist for the delivery of the Lesson Study method (Extended Preparation Lesson Study: Mynott, 2017; Mynott, Paalanen & Jaffer, 2018; Collaborative Lesson Study: Seleznyov, 2018; Lesson Study UK: Dudley 2014). The variation of LS methods needs its own continuum, one which will show their overlap as well as their differences.

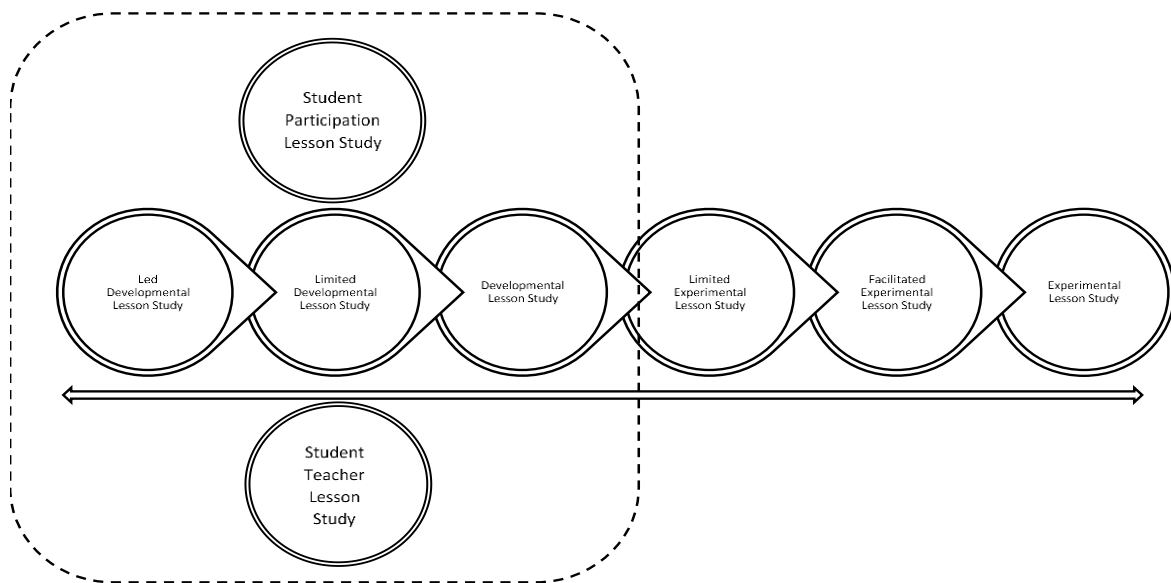


Figure 1: A continuum of Lesson Study foci.

The continuum in this paper, in Figure 1, is to do with how much the focus of LS is on research and experimentation. With Led Developmental LS (this might be led by a facilitator from a school or university) being the least focused on research and Experimental LS (ELS) being the most research focused. This paper builds on Mynott's (2018) definitions of Developmental Lesson Study (DLS) and Experimental Lesson Study (ELS) as it expands out the original Venn diagram into a continuum of six possible stages.

One of the challenges to defining LS using this focus is that there is unlikely to be an actual dichotomy between research and development in LS. While the LS types located within the dashed section of the continuum are not research focused, some research or research related activities are likely to occur.

Lofthouse and King's (2017) paper illustrates this well, as while I would determine that they had been exploring existing knowledge on questioning through a DLS, it is likely that in order to be developmental for the participants, the facilitators needed to undertake research to acquire the information they shared. It is just as likely that Experimental LS types will have developmental benefits to participants, as they will revise and hone LS skills which may have been acquired in DLS previously. As a result, my intention in modelling a continuum of LS foci, is not to generate the perception of a LS dichotomy between what is research and what is development in LS but rather to draw attention to how a different focus on a LS might support participants in different ways. This is because while I do think research is a

valuable endeavour, I also believe that it is important to develop our own knowledge of the existing resources to deepen our understanding of what is already known in education.

2. Developmental Lesson Study (DLS)

The LS types located within the dashed shape are the ones that are less researched focused. As a result, they are more developmental focused. The developmental focus of these LS means that they are more concerned with the study of what exists. Wanatabe, Takahashi & Yoshida (2008) in their discussion of tasks identify that there are two types of knowledge: one developmental where the existing information and resources are studied and one where new information is generated (Mynott, 2018). If this model is applied to LS, as a method, the notion is that LS also has two broad types with the developmental one (DLS) being the exploration of the existing information. This in practice might be the participants' in-depth exploration of a text book and the tasks associated with it. The next few paragraphs explore in more detail some of the possibilities of LS foci that are contained within DLS.

A DLS might be planned by collecting together the available resources in school. An example of this is a Maths LS in Year 1. The teachers started by collecting their previous year's plans, the limited range of textbooks for Year 1 pupils and other available resources. They then sat with the LS facilitator to identify and review the information that they had. This initial review indicated that the Year 1 team had spent less time, in the previous year, on recognising and counting numbers than the textbook suggested. They were also able to identify similar parts of their sequencing to the book and other resources, but could see that conceptual variation happened more in the other resources than they had allowed in their previous planning. After discussion the team decided that they would like to look at undertaking two additional weeks of work on recognising and counting before exploring a DLS on conceptual variation on making numbers. This mean that their LS would be a DLS as they would explore the conceptual variations available to see how these support pupils to explore the representations possible of individual numbers 1-9.

In the Year 1 example, the DLS could also have been used by the facilitator as a method of supporting instructional reflection. The participants in the example given did this organically but by presenting participants with their own planning (sequence of learning),

examples for resources and textbooks it is possible to get participants to review their thinking, reflect on their instruction and as such learn from their own thinking about the available resources. If this was led to a greater extend by the facilitator, participants might be presented with a range of resources selected for discussion to enable them to see whys in which practice can develop, as for new teachers or student teachers. This supported instructional reflection would be an example of a Led Developmental Lesson Study (LDLS), as the facilitator would be collating the resources together and supporting the participants to explore them.

3. Experimental Lesson Study (ELS)

Once a participant is more skilled in DLS they could venture into Experimental Lesson Study (ELS) by thinking beyond the resources and through identifying gaps in the educational research and or practice. Mynott et al (2018) did this with their research into consonant clusters. They identified that there was a gap in the resources for teaching phonics, as there was little available guidance on teaching consonant clusters. They undertook an enquiry that meant they were adding to the available resources in this case identifying gaps in Groff's (1972) sequence of consonant cluster learning and sequencing clusters at the

end of words by spelling and readability. After establishing their sequence, they used three LS lessons to evaluate the impact of their sequence on pupils' ability to decode and read clusters (Mynott et al, 2018). As this was an ELS the team needed to identify if and how their new ideas were impacting on pupils so they also supported their research with a pre and post assessment of pupils. The results indicated that in this pilot there was a significant improvement in accuracy of decoding and reading speed, in pupils who had studied the cluster sequence. The team are currently developing a second phase of research to evaluate the sequence using DLS with other schools to see if the pupil results continue to be positive.

ELS tends to have a stronger focus on identifying a new way, a new piece of learning. This focus might be a very small nuanced aspect of research or it might as in the above example be able developing a new sequence of teaching and learning where a knowledge gap has been identified. The three stages from limited ELS to ELS in its fullest form represent the variations in the amount of research that might be undertaken. In the phonics example the team had to identify missing clusters, position them to advance Groff's (1972) work and then assess, plan, teach and review their new sequence before evaluating its impact on learning. This was

definitely research, and an ELS. If the group had been given the sequencing but this was untested they would have still been involved in research but to a more limited extent. Thus, the definition of ELS and where a LS falls on that section of the continuum depends on how much of the research is being undertaken by the participant team and how much is being led externally. If a team is led to much by an outside expert they may then be undertaking DLS instead as they are not actively experimenting.

4. Summary

I set out a continuum of LS foci in Figure 1 to enable further discussion about what is LS and how does it focus on development and experimentation.

ELS is more difficult to develop. Participants are likely to need to explore LS through

developmental work before experimenting with using it to research and add new knowledge. This is due to the complexities of collaboration, expertise and time (Mynott, 2017) that exist in LS. Therefore, it makes sense to suggest that DLS is used to develop participants, build their skills and encourage them to reflect on their learning and craft before facilitating them to explore ELS.

One thing that is clear is that for participants both DLS and ELS focused LS are likely to be beneficial but I think Wanatabe et al (2008) summarise it best with their inclusion of the saying to teach one, you must first learn ten [things]. I understand this to mean that a clear and significant engagement in DLS may enable you to undertake ELS when you find a line of enquiry to pursue, but DLS in itself has significant value to supporting participant learning.

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What Happened in Vegas Should NOT Stay in Vegas: Sharing key learning from the 2018 Teaching Learning Coaching (TLC) Conference

A Thinkpiece Working Paper by Trista Hollweck

I have had to take some serious reflection time before blogging on my experience from the [Teaching Learning Coaching Conference 2018](#) held on October 9-12 in Las Vegas, Nevada organized by the Instructional Coaching Group and Dr. Jim Knight. For those of you interested, the conference's lively twitter feed is found at #TLCVegas2018 and #TLCourage. I wish I was able to tweet more, but the conference WIFI didn't seem to like my Canadian devices!

This year's TLC Conference theme was: COURAGE. I arrived late on the Canadian Thanksgiving Monday and from the pre-conference onward, every session was like cognitive candy, with an extra sprinkling of stimulating discussion at every turn & meal. It is no wonder I had to take some time to come down from the sugar high and digest all I learned. This post aims to share my key take-aways and offer links for further exploration. Although I recognize being succinct is an important coaching skill (reiterated often throughout the conference), it is clear that I need further work on this...

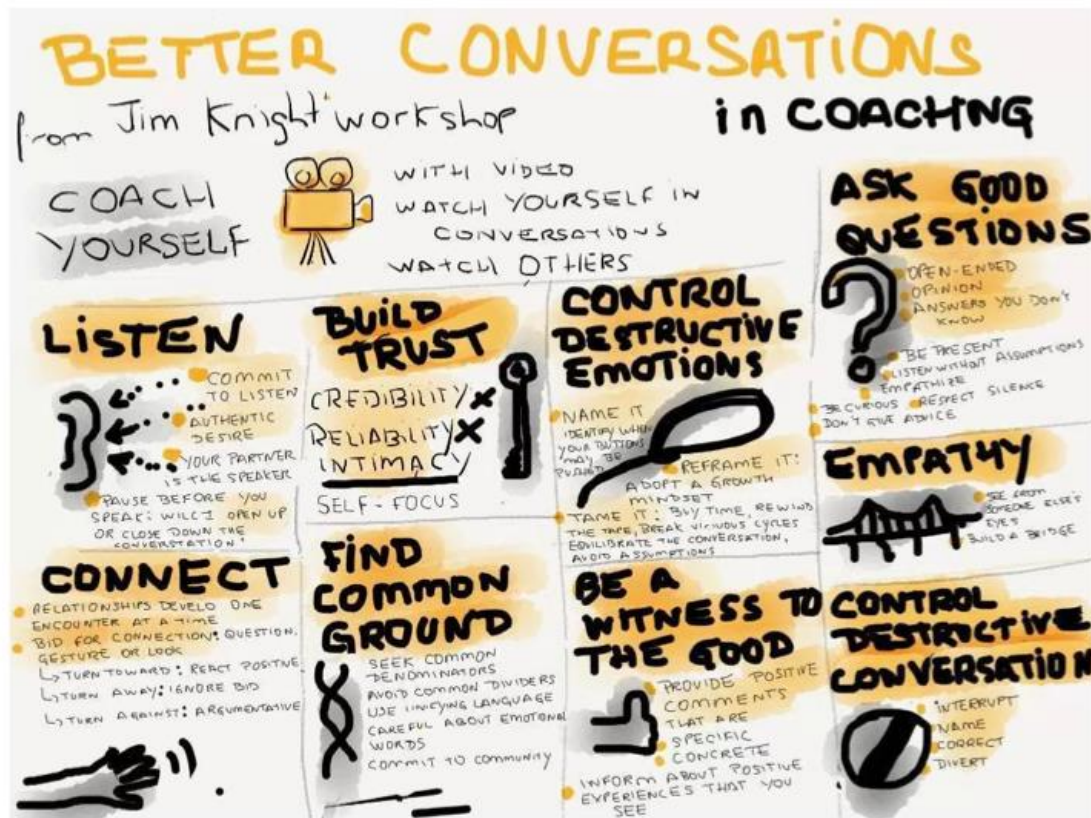
The preconference: Better Conversations with Ann Hoffman (Fun Fact: her son is a founding member of the band The Shadowboxers & I am grooving to their beats as I write).

I had read Jim Knight's "Better Conversations: Coaching Ourselves and Each Other to be More Credible, Caring, and Connected," so the session was more of a review, however, I did appreciate Ann Hoffman's energy and her emphasis on 'Getting better is NOT an option. How you do it is.' In this session, we worked through these questions:

- Why is the way I communicate important?
- What are the six better conversation beliefs?
- What are my beliefs?
- What are the ten better conversation habits?
- What can I do to internalize the habits?



*All resources as well as a podcast & webinar on the book can be found [here](#).



Sketchnote by: [Silvana Scarso Meneghini, PhD](#)

I left this session with the goal to return to Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed." If dialogue is at the core of conversations, there is power in reframing coaching *dialogue as a meeting of the minds* and exploring Freire's 5 requirements for thinking together:

1. **Humility**- that it is more important to get things right vs being right

2. **Faith**- that we all hold wisdom & knowledge
3. **Love**- anchored in empathy and that we both want the best outcome
4. **Critical thinking**- we think together
5. **Hope**- that there are many possibilities for a better future and we are better off for having these conversations.

These five concepts also offer a useful framework to explore my TLC Conference keynote experience.

TLC conference keynote recap:

Jim Knight is often lauded for his *humility*, but it is his sincere *hope* for the future that I think most inspired conference participants: *“To hold a vision for a better future, and to act in ways that make that vision become a reality.”* In this talk, Jim argued that if we love and learn, we will lead, and leave a legacy. If you weren’t inspired through his personal stories, his selection of commercials rarely leaves a dry eye. Interested? Check out his choice for *love* ([IKEA](#) -nailed it!) and *learning* through intentional practice ([Bell Whiskey](#) -you made me weep!). It is clear that the legacy of Freire and Shane Lopez (Making Hope Happen) have deeply influenced Knight’s praxis. Knight raises key questions that I am still rumbling with: *What’s one part of your vision for a better world? What are you doing to make that vision a reality?*

In his keynote, **Dr. Pedro A. Noguera** challenged participants to engage in *critical thinking*- to ask better questions focusing on

equity and change. He argued that achievement gaps are the outcomes of opportunity gaps and we need to be asking how we can create schools where a child’s race and class do not predict how well they will do. He also stressed the need to focus on the teachers: *“When we don’t support the teachers, we don’t support our students.”* I am sure I was not alone in feeling a heavy responsibility to reflect on my own role in systemic inequity and the progression of student disengagement after his talk & poignant question: *Why do well-intentioned individuals create inequality for students and families?* (Want to learn more? Check out this [TEDtalk](#))

Linda Cliatt-Wayman embodied *love* as she shared her courageous teaching, leading and coaching story in the final keynote of the first day. As Jim noted, we all should watch her powerful [TedTalk](#) and learn from her deep love and desire to make a difference in the lives of her students. A woman of slogans, she inspired us all to do better for the children and youth we work with and for and that one person can make a difference: *“If nobody tells you today that they love you, remember that I do and always will!”* She is every bit as inspiring and real as she is in her TEDtalk and I will be sharing it soon in my teacher education classes. The post keynote Q&A was an excellent opportunity to explore Cliatt-

Wayman's journey in greater depth and reinforced the call for all coaches to not only reflect on our 'why': *Why are we doing what we are doing?* But to DO something about it: *So What, Now What?*

Chip Heath's Day 2 opening keynote on *The Power of Moments* is still resonating deeply with me- so much so that I bought the book (co-authored with his brother Dan). Great experiences hinge on peak moments and these peak moments have one or more of these four key elements: Elevation, Insight, Pride and Connection. Reflecting on our own K-12 schooling experience, we were asked to consider: Why aren't there more peak moments in the K-12 schooling experience? What peak moments do I create for my students? What peak moments am I creating in my personal and professional life? Through Heath's use of powerful examples, a sense of **hope** and urgency was instilled in me (and likely other audience members) to start building these peak moments. As Chris Barbic, creator of [Yes! College Prep's signing day](#) notes: It takes collective responsibility, collective support and collective hard-work! I was also profoundly moved by Eugene O'Kelly's (2007) approach to making peak moments. Documented in his book, *Chasing Daylight: How my Forthcoming Death Transformed my Life*" O'Kelly shared how

after his diagnosis of inoperable brain cancer, he used his last three months to *really live*- to make peak moments with his loved ones: "*I'd attained a new level of awareness, one I didn't possess the first 53 years of my life. It's just impossible for me to imagine going back to another way of thinking, when this new way has enriched me so. I lost something precious, but I also gained something precious.*" As I listened to this talk, The Tragically Hip's song "courage" was playing in my head on repeat and I couldn't help but think of Gord Downie and his diagnosis of an incurable brain tumour. He is the perfect Canadian example of a man making peak moments with loved ones & fans in his final months during their [Man Machine Poem Tour](#) (Check out the trailer to the Long Time Running documentary [here](#)). You can be sure that O'Kelly's book is next on my reading list. (If you want to get a sense of Chip Heath's presentation for a business audience-check him out at Forrester's CXNYC 2017 [here](#).)

In her keynote, **Kristin Anderson** explored the meaning of courage and returned to its latin roots, cor: "To speak one's mind by telling all one's heart." It was clear that she has **faith** that teachers (and coaches) have the potential to make a difference in the lives of students and colleagues and urged us to unleash our superpowers! She asked: *What*

would you do if you knew you couldn't fail?
What gets in the way of you taking that risk?
Can you tap into your courage and self-efficacy to make this happen? From this session, I am eager to explore self-efficacy and collective-efficacy further and in particular, how it relates to coaching in education.

The closing keynote was by **Joellen Killion** entitled Coaching with Heart, Mind, and Hand. Using a mountain climbing metaphor, Killion urged coaches to engage in **critical thinking** to examine our own mental models: *Who am I as a coach? Do I coach from the heart, mind or hand? What is implicit and explicit in my decisions, actions and words? What am I learning about myself, my practice, and my impact on my clients?* Anchored in transformative learning theory, she outlined how the mind, heart and hand can work together to make powerful coaching experiences. It is through committing to dissonance, grasping courage and examining continuously that we will improve our coaching practice.

Beyond the keynotes, there were a variety of breakout sessions to choose from- each chosen to offer conference participants an opportunity to explore different areas, such as

coaching processes, district equity coaching, coaching for emotional resilience, coaching teachers to increase student motivation and manage behaviour, and beyond. I really appreciate that the TLC Vegas conference included a wide variety of presenters who come at coaching through different theoretical lenses and use different processes. However, as much as I found this a strength of the conference, the sheer variety of what 'coaching' means in education and the number of different models is also a great weakness. With coaching defined and understood in so many different (and sometimes opposing) ways, it is incredibly challenging for practitioners to navigate. In my conversations with conference attendees, I was struck with how different our understanding of coaching is and how directly this understanding is tied to our work environment. Clearly, when it comes to coaching, context matters!

Another interesting aspect for me (and something I continue to struggle with) is the fact that so many districts are resistant to using the term 'coaching.' I tried to explore this further with a few of the conference participants and get the sense it has something to do with a history of 'compliance coaching' in their districts or that the term

connotes 'improvement coaching,' which leads to teacher resistance. I was especially disheartened to see that this desire to rebrand or rename 'coaching' as something else was shared by participants from a variety of provinces in Canada. As someone who wants to build coaching cultures across Canadian schools and districts, this is particularly worrying. It certainly would be helpful to have some consistency in terms of definition and understanding. With the new partnership between Growth Coaching International (GCI) and Instructional Coaching Group (ICG), I am hoping that (without losing their unique qualities) some more clarity will be made available.

On a personal level, I appreciated the opportunity to learn more about 'transformational coaching,' the model put forth by **Elena Aguilar**. I like the way Elena defines coaching as "a partnership in which you assist someone in becoming reflective and moving towards actionable goals that will be impactful." I use her book "The Art of Coaching" in my graduate course and look forward to reading "Onward." I loved seeing her role play transformative coaching with an audience member in this session and was reminded of the importance of modelling coaching to support coach professional

learning. I will definitely use her follow-up questions to spark further discussion: What did you notice about what the coach said? Was there anything you found surprising or unexpected? What did the coach say that might cause a shift in the client's thinking?

Another breakout session that I really enjoyed was the advanced coaching session with **Dr. Christian van Nieuwerburgh**. Having read most of his work, I was looking forward to meeting Christian in person and to learning more about his forthcoming book. The session was framed around this question: "In practice, what is an experienced coach able to do that a newly-trained coach might not be able to do?" With so many experienced coaches and coach trainers in the room, it was a powerful opportunity to not only share ideas, but also explore the various tensions (Christian offers nine) that exist in coaching. This session was a powerful reminder to *notice* what we do as experienced coaches and to examine our intentional practices so that we might be able to better help our newly-trained colleagues.

So, in a nutshell, I left the Teaching Learning Coaching Conference 2018 inspired. It was not only the conference keynotes and



sessions that contributed to my learning, but I loved the opportunity to reconnect and learn from colleagues who are doing meaningful work in my school district, build my coaching community network, learn about incredible coaching in international contexts, and finally, meet and chat with coaching experts whose

work has greatly influenced my own coaching practice.

Thank you Jim & the ICG for the powerful learning experience and I am already looking forward to the 2019 TLC Conference in Kansas!

Reflections on the Development and Implementation of Interprofessional Education between Pharmacy and Dentistry

A Research Working Paper by Ilona Johnson

Abstract

Background: Inter-professional education (IPE) is advocated as a key approach for modern healthcare education to develop better readiness for collaborative practice. Reports indicate that it enables the professions to “learn with, from and about each other” and can optimise exchange of experience and expertise. While there have been calls for better dentistry-pharmacy inter-professional education there is limited evidence for best practice.

Aim: This paper describes learning and reflections and feedback from the process of developing and implementing interprofessional learning activities between dental, pharmacy and hygiene and therapy students.

Methods: Data collected from staff and from student “post it note” exit polls were collated and analysed using a thematic approach to data.

Results: The interprofessional learning sessions were most successful when delivered in a clinical setting and when students were able to interact. Challenges for delivery

included issues which included timetables, room bookings, staff training/experience, capacity and attitudes.

Conclusions: Interprofessional educational activity development is itself a learning process of development involving a range of factors that can contribute to success. However, there are many challenges involved. Surrounding support and willingness of staff to try new things and work together to overcome the obstacles is important in the journey to success.

Introduction

Interprofessional education (IPE) is defined as: “Occasions when two or more professions learn from and about each other to improve collaboration and the quality of care”. (Barr 2002) This is a concept beyond co-teaching (students in the same space) and involves teaching activities which involve students interacting, learning with each other and from each other. Interprofessional teaching approaches are considered particularly important for modern healthcare education and the World Health Organisation has highlighted the importance of this for

improving collaborative practice and care.(World Health Organisation 2015; Yan et al. n.d.)

This sense of importance is reflected in the strict regulatory frameworks that govern clinical education. The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC), the regulator for Pharmacy training, has included the requirement for Pharmacy degree courses to include *“learning based on experience that provides education in interprofessional practices and procedures with other healthcare professionals”*.(General Pharmaceutical Council 2011) The General Dental Council (GDC) is less explicit about interprofessional learning requirements but does specify interprofessional outcomes, for example, to *“Communicate effectively with colleagues from dental and other healthcare professions in patients’ best interests”*.(General Dental Council. 2015)

While there is strong support for IPE, most guidance has focussed on evidence from learning activities between medical, pharmacy and nursing courses.(Reeves et al. 2016) The majority of evidence in dentistry has been in relation to intraprofessional training between dentists and other dental health professionals, specifically, hygienists and therapists.(Brame et al. 2015) Academics have called to improve wider

interprofessional training for dentistry (Lygre et al. 2017) but this is a challenging area as there is little available evidence to guide this process.

This paper describes learning and reflections and feedback from the process of developing and implementing interprofessional learning activities between dental, pharmacy and hygiene and therapy students.

Background

The initial work to introduce dental-pharmacy IPE started in 2016. Discussions were held between pharmacy and dentistry to identify suitable topics and activities and it was agreed that purpose of this educational experience should be to develop students’ understanding of the respective professions and to enhance skills in working as part of the wider healthcare team. The general principle of *“keeping things simple”* was employed and staff agreed to bring together students who were just about to commence *“clinical care”* for the initial teaching sessions (in year 2) as numbers of students were well matched and there was some overlap and interdisciplinary potential in topics such as communication skills, history taking, medication histories, advice giving (smoking cessation and oral hygiene) and oral cancer awareness. The topics chosen were well understood by each

of the professions, making facilitation and finding facilitators easier.

In the first year (2016/17), following an extensive period of co-ordination, five interprofessional teaching sessions were delivered to over 200 students, half from clinical dental course (dentistry, hygiene and therapy) and half from pharmacy. Each student attended one session; each session included between 30 to 50 students, with a 50-50 balance of pharmacy to dental. Due to clinical space constraints, one of the sessions was held in the lecture theatre in the School of Dentistry. The remaining sessions were undertaken in clinical dental teaching clinics but practical clinical work was not undertaken as this would have involved significant National Health Service administrative work.

In the second year, following positive feedback, two different interprofessional teaching sessions were organised for the next cohort of students. The first focussed on dental/health prevention and the second focussed on case studies and clinical histories. For practical reasons, sessions were delivered two months earlier than the previous sessions. Teaching sessions were delivered arranged in large lecture theatres and breakout rooms, with students working in interprofessional groups of eight. The first session of the two sessions was delivered as a

predominantly co-teaching event which included a series of lectures, organised by dental staff (who were involved in preparing students for clinical activity), interspersed with talks from pharmaceutical product representatives and short interactive interprofessional period of activity of approximately 20 minutes at the end for discussion between students. The second session (delivered at the end of the same week) comprised two short talks, then case study based groupwork and a feedback session. Each student attended the two sessions.

Data Collection

Staff recorded issues encountered during delivery and implementation. Students were asked to leave feedback on Post-it notes. Data were collated using Excel and analysed using a thematic informed approach. (Braun & Clarke 2006) Students were also invited to complete a feedback questionnaire online after all sessions held in 2017/18. Staff comments were also collated and considered as part of review processes.

Review of the process of implementation and delivery

The planning and implementation of IPE was challenging on many levels. The initial proposal was to bring the pharmacy students

into the school as “patients” in a clinical setting with students partnering up to demonstrate and discuss clinical skills. This was initially welcomed by most staff but the challenges involved in implementation were considerable leading to adaption and simplification of the sessions.

Issues that arose during the process of implementation included:

Practical and administrative issues

- Timetable issues (arranging students to attend in groups)
- Lack of suitable rooms (and distance issues) for teaching, debrief and preparation of students
- Administrative burden involved in NHS registration of pharmacy students (for “clinical” activity)
- Practical and ethical burden of collecting medical history information for risk assessment
- Delays in responses to emails which delayed organisation and progress
- Staff considered that students in year 2 had not developed sufficient skills of speed to contribute to a clinical session.

Staff related issues

- Limited experience of IPE amongst some dental staff

- Limited experience of dental-pharmacy IPE
- Pharmacy staff were unavailable to help for initial sessions
- Lack of willingness to try something new
- Some of the dental staff felt “traditional” lecture-based teaching was best
- Lack of commitment and strong resistance from some staff
- Poor communication between some staff

Outcomes

Overall, the outcomes arising from the sessions were positive, with students reporting that they had learned more about core topics and their respective professions. Furthermore, the sessions were successfully delivered. All students were able to attend, teaching rooms were identified and staff were able to facilitate. Students reported enjoying the sessions, staff participating in the sessions reported developed their understanding of pharmacy and there was an improved relationship between pharmacy and dentistry. However, the effort involved was considerable.

Feedback from Students

Data collected from over 200 students who participated in the first interprofessional teaching sessions (2016/17) showed that students felt that the teaching they had

received was “good”. Comments indicated that students found the discussions useful and the majority stated that they had been able to learn something new and that they felt this was worthwhile. Many described having gained a wider understanding of topics as a and a better understanding of the work of their colleagues, with most having underestimated the extent of practice and learning required for other professions.

119 P "It was very beneficial and I learned a lot that I wouldn't have learned anywhere else"

Students who had undertaken the sessions in the clinical environment described the additional benefits of learning in clinically relevant environment. Students indicated that they felt that “prior reading” materials, organisation and the fit of the session (to their personal needs) could be improved. A small number of dental students made comments about the timing of the session being “too close” to a clinical examination, and that the time in the timetable could be better used for revising. While pharmacy students noted the value of practicing clinical skills, dental students did not appear to notice that they had been given the opportunity to practice skills which were due to be examined practically in their forthcoming examinations (e.g. history taking and advice giving).

2P “Hold before pharmacy OSCE as smoking cessation practice was useful”

Feedback from the interprofessional sessions in the subsequent year (2017/18) was mixed. Student comments predominantly focussed on the lectures delivered in the first of the two teaching sessions which were described as too long, tedious and not relevant to pharmacy. They disliked the lack of opportunity for discussions. Students valued the case studies in the second teaching session but many of the dental students described being uncomfortable with their knowledge gaps and pharmacy students struggled with relevance as they felt they could do very little clinically for some of the cases.

22P “I didn't really gain much from the lectures, more suited to the dentistry”

44P “limited opportunity to discuss with the other students”

Feedback from Staff

Staff responses indicated that the sessions held in the first year (2016/17) were worthwhile for student learning. However, some were less enthusiastic. Dental staff facilitated these sessions as pharmacy staff were unavailable. Some of the staff who did facilitate sessions indicated that they had little experience of teaching in workshops and felt

they lacked the understanding and support to meet pharmacy student needs. One member of staff indicated that they could see some benefits, but felt the time spent on the activity was too much and that the content could be delivered more quickly (and with less effort) through traditional lectures.

While staff were better prepared in the second year, feedback was mixed. The initial teaching plan was for both sessions to be interactive. At the last minute some of the clinical dental staff had scheduled in a number of lectures to cover specific teaching content for the dental students, which they felt was missing. There were a number of dental and pharmacy staff attending the sessions who had prepared to facilitate interactive teaching and were not expecting a session dominated by lectures. This was seen as a missed opportunity for learning. Staff and student reports indicated that the second teaching session, which involved facilitation of case studies, worked better (but there were challenges accommodating students and moving between rooms). A number of staff said that the interactive discursive teaching session helped them to learn more about pharmacy and dentistry that the sessions had highlighted gaps in their own (and students') knowledge.

Learning points

Administration: The process of introducing interprofessional learning activities has been a learning journey. It has been worthwhile, but much of the work has been more complex and time consuming than most conventional planned teaching activities. The practical aspects of planning and organising teaching across two schools (and four programmes) was often complicated; tasks that are normally simple and routine e.g: finding suitable times in the timetable, locating and booking rooms of sufficient size in a nearby location were particularly difficult.

Key Learning Points for Administration

- Administrative support and help is essential for success (particularly for co-ordinating rooms and timetables)
- Strategies and support need to be in place to enhance the fit between NHS and University activities
- Agreement for priority within the timetable, rooms and staff is needed to ensure that IPE is delivered as intended

Staff: While many staff have welcomed the opportunity for joint teaching and collaboration, it has taken time to develop an understanding of crossovers between topics

and professions. Dental and pharmacy staff do work together professionally, but most staff worked together but often via prescription and phone in different locations. Most staff had not worked together as teachers and there were some unanticipated differences, for example. There were differences in how staff from the respective professions approached different topics and preferred teaching methods were also different; workshop-based learning was more commonly used in pharmacy. Professional language was not always the same only some of the dental staff commonly taught inter-professionally. These differences meant that while some of the dental staff were open to flexible student led learning, others struggled with these concepts and were uncomfortable with the approaches used, often lacking in enthusiasm and lacking prioritisation. This caused delays and additional work for those involved in organising the sessions. Leadership, commitment and often persistence of staff in directly addressing problems was one of the main factors that helped to overcome these issues.

Teaching staff were a key part of the experience but some of the early interprofessional teaching sessions were less balanced, creating some tensions. Pharmacy staff were unable to attend for some of the teaching sessions due to examinations which

resulted some tension and some of the dental staff found the larger numbers and unfamiliar students to be a challenge. Similarly, pharmacy staff struggled when sessions were dominated by traditional dental lectures. Models that worked best were workshops where students and staff each had some command of a topic and were able to convey that to others. Larger groups (approximately 6-10 students) were more successful than smaller groups, as this improved social interaction and overcame issues of students with poor knowledge and students who were particularly quiet.

Interactions between staff, brought more issues to the surface, than student only discussions or single profession facilitators, because of the greater background knowledge introduced. The opportunity for learning and successes have inspired a number of staff to enhance their efforts and continue with improving this areas of teaching.

Key Learning Points for Staff

- Staff need support and development to learn to try new things and be flexible in their teaching
- Staff capacity to deliver IPE (development and delivery) needs to be planned and deemed fair
- Staff need to learn to work together with other professions themselves in order

improve facilitation of learning between disciplines

- Expert IPE (and not just topic) leadership can improve teaching
- The importance of IPE and collaboration need to be emphasised to staff to avoid this being the lowest priority for teaching and help overcome issues with resistant staff

Content: The interprofessional teaching between pharmacy and dentistry covered four different courses (pharmacy, dentistry, dental hygiene and dental therapy). Clinically based discussions and cases were considered to be most relevant teaching content and joint facilitation by dental and pharmacy staff, was the most successful approach. The process of discussing and developing case studies and preparatory material for students was helpful for students and staff, as it helped to establish a framework for discussions and the ability to prepare students and staff in advance of teaching. Students from other courses were often “unknown” and this pre-prepared material also helped staff understand needs of the students from other schools. However, challenges remain and the process of development of materials, planning of teaching, development of staff and

implementation still needs to be well supported.

Teaching materials, planning and content

- Content, activity, timing and delivery needs careful planning to “fit” to student needs
- Materials need to be available to help address knowledge gaps that impede discussions
- Involving students and staff at all stages can help to improve content and relevance

Conclusion

In conclusion, interprofessional learning activity development is itself a learning process. Teaching sessions are unlikely to be “perfect” but can still deliver good experiences for students. Staff flexibility, willingness to adapt and staff interprofessional learning and involvement of students can support the process of improvement. Furthermore, it is the commitment and willingness of staff to collaborate, try new things and overcome the obstacles involved that appears to underpin success.

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Learning Rounds: What potential for Teacher Inquiry?

A practice insight working paper by Val Poultney

Introduction

Back in 2015 I began work with a primary school in Derby City that was under Special Measures. It was the beginning of a school-university partnership that was to last for over two years. During that time the staff were given the opportunity to 'research' and collect evidence related to problematic areas of their practice. Looking back at this work which was eventually published (Poultney, 2017), I began to wonder just what 'research' had really meant in this primary school context and what these teachers had gained from their experience of collecting evidence, arriving at solutions to their teaching problems, telling other teachers about their findings and writing their chapters for this book. Many of the contributors to the book have since taken up promoted roles, been confident enough to speak at various conferences and make contribution to many professional events since then. Over the time we spent together these teachers have developed a confident 'critical eye' and the ability to ask insightful ask about practice. Day (2017) refers this as the establishment of 'human capital' which is likely to engender trust and a sense of individual and collective well-being which will

motivate teachers to engage in activities directly related to raising school standards.

Professional Learning and Rounds

More recently I have worked with teachers using lesson study (Dudley 2014) as a means of evaluating their practice and solving problematic issues (Fox and Poultney, in review, 2018), also action research and teacher inquiry. One of the biggest challenges in these approaches is educating teachers how to collect and analyse evidence from classroom observations. Learning, Teaching, Educational or Instructional Rounds (the terms are interchangeable), which originates from the US is another approach teachers can use to undertake research and inquiry. The difference between Rounds and other approaches is that Rounds are based on a clinical approach to learning where the novice learner (teacher or doctor), through a series of cognitive steps from gathering facts and knowledge about medical/teaching practice, makes transparent their diagnosis, treatments/solutions to other learners as they gain experience in treating patients/educating students (Reece and Klaber, 2017). So in the spirit of Stenhouse (1975) who viewed the



classroom as a laboratory, Rounds uses the classroom as clinical practice uses the hospital ward as a place of learning for all.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

Teachers are well acquainted with working in teams; often referred to as PLCs. This approach is seen to be collaborative, where everyone benefits from being part of the team in respect of their professional learning. PLCs have been imagined as:

A group of people sharing and critically interrogating their practice in an ongoing, reflective, inclusive, learning-orientated, growth-promoted way. (Watson, 2014: 19).

The success of the outcomes of the PLC in reality depends upon the quality of the critical dialogue teachers are prepared to use. To achieve such criticality teachers need to agree a protocol for how the dialogues should be conducted. Holmlund-Nelson et al. (2010) noted two types of teacher conversation: the 'congenial conversation' (the type of social dialogue one might have with a colleague in the staffroom, akin to narratives of practice) and the 'deep conversation' or 'collegial dialogue' (the critical use of evidence and school data in order to solve problems). This distinction helps to move teachers away from more superficial narratives of practice to dialogue which generates meaning and

knowledge. Rounds enable teachers to engage in critical dialogue and support mutual learning. They set the protocols for the type of discussions that generate understanding using evidence from classroom observations, school data and research. This has also been noted by Frederick and Benton, (2018).

There are two distinct models of Rounds. The Del Prete (2013) model is aligned with clinical practice approaches. Here trainee teachers are engaged in a Learning Round hosted by experienced teachers.

This model focuses on an issue of practice ('practice-centred inquiry') with trainee learning ('learning centred inquiry') as its central remit. The experienced teacher is required to explain the context for the students' learning and curriculum to the trainees, and will then outline the focus of their inquiry and discuss how they might engage with students during the lesson. The second model is Instructional Rounds (City, 2011), where 'problematic' issues of practice are identified, and where classroom-based observations by, for example, a group of senior staff, provide an evidence-base about a specific school improvement issue. Both approaches encourage trainees and teachers alike to engage in critical reflective dialogue about their own learning and that of their students. The gathering of evidence for a

particular pedagogical issue under study helps to remove judgements made about teacher performance.

So how do teachers use Rounds in practice?

The first step is to agree an area, for example, of underperformance or related to a teacher career stage. A PLC is formed comprising those professionals best experienced to conduct the learning round. This might be teachers, senior, middle leadership, consultants. The group agrees the focus of inquiry and who is to undertake the classroom observations (usually no more than 3-4 observers). There is no rubric for the observations, which should only last 20-30 minutes and these data are shared in a debrief meeting. Observers focus on the specific area of inquiry during their observations and make descriptive notes (descriptive phase). This specific, descriptive evidence is then shared in the debrief meeting with the other observers. Using these accumulated data sets, patterns or themes are identified. These may be related to specific curriculum areas or issues attributable to specific areas of practice/pedagogy. Data which does not 'fit' is noted as exceptional and may be excluded if not directly related to the focus of the inquiry (analytical phase). Observers then put themselves in the position

of the learners (the students/pupils) and ask what they have *actually* learnt. This allows observers to be able to predict what the students might have learnt if they had had more information on a specific topic, or instruction on how to source it (predictive phase). Finally the group enters the evaluation phase, where they attempt to decide if the 'problem' is real or imagined and how robust the evidence is at shining a light in a dark corner of practice. Thus there is a close interplay between the students, their teachers and subject content. The observation is closely linked with the debrief session and the protocol of descriptive evidence, data analysis, prediction and evaluation.

If Rounds are so good why are more schools not using them?

The simple answer to this question is that there is very little theoretical analysis or empirical data to support this professional learning tool or approach to teacher inquiry. We perhaps need to think about how teachers learn when they are part of a PLC and how they use their agency. Philpott and Oates (2017: 319) see this as interplay between teachers' past experiences and their ways of thinking and acting in any social context (iterational); their ability to envision possible future alternative ways of thinking and acting



and what they are (projective), and the capacity and resources for the current situation (practical-evaluative). Previous understandings and actions can, therefore, determine future ways of thinking, understanding and subsequent acting. This might allow teachers to remain unchanged in their thinking and/or actions or give them possibilities to think and act in new ways. PLCs have been seen as a medium through which teachers can develop their agency, both in terms of their own personal learning and as a way of either responding to, or driving reform.

Rounds should not be isolated events and require leadership, planning and trialling prior to implementation. Teachers might disagree about what constitutes an effective knowledge-base for teaching and leaders may need to take into account that teacher observers may 'pull to the black hole' of existing education practice and the orthodoxy of what counts as good practice (Philpott and Oates, 2015: 34). In their research with four Scottish schools Philpott and Oates (2015; 2017) note the outcomes of Learning Rounds were fraught with difficulties for the following reasons:

- A focus on teacher actions rather than a connection between teacher actions and student learning;
- The observers did not report evidence with a fine-grained focus on specifics of individual actions;
- Classroom activity was recorded more as an audit and any 'good practice' observed was not described in how it had a positive effect;
- No theory of action was proposed (link between observation data and what is/what is not working in classrooms);
- Premature evaluations on the basis of unclear evidence.

PLCs were then unable to develop their own theory of action or build a sufficient evidence-base to solve the inquiry focus. As Rounds do not require the intervention of an external consultant, and given that teachers do not need access to supporting academic literature, they can seem to offer a financially attractive approach to professional development for classroom practitioners in schools. Philpott and Oates note, however, that a lack of investment in the level of preparation needed to undertake Rounds may have contributed to the participating schools failing to maximise the potential of the strategy as a school improvement/teacher learning initiative/opportunity.

Conclusion

In future partnership collaborations I would, as an academic, strongly consider the use of Learning Rounds as a model for teacher inquiry. This approach has potential for schools to amass an evidence-base about teaching and learning and for teacher professionals to build understanding and knowledge about specific areas of problematic practice. Aligned with clinical methods of learning, Rounds challenges

teachers to think about their work in less judgemental ways and to engage in critical discussion based on evidence they have collected, analysed and evaluated. This enables teachers to build theory of practice and improve intellectual and professional capacity. There are, however, some challenges for schools implementing Rounds, linked to leadership, methods of implementation, design of PLCs and development of teacher critical discourses.

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Exploring a moment of practice: a structured reflective conversation

A Practice Insight Working Paper by Anna Cox & James Underwood

This short discussion and the accompanying diagram below together illustrate a structured conversation that we use at the University of Northampton to enable teachers and school leaders to explore the ways in which they define good teaching and the reasons why they define it in this way. It is used by us as a model on one masters' module on reflective practice taught at the University of Northampton. However, we also use it in other contexts in which we are working with teachers. We are also now evaluating its use as a model and expect to publish regarding this in 2018 and 2019.

To follow the structure of this conversation through, using the diagram presented below, start with the circle: as this illustrates, with this conversation, the teacher, school leader or whoever it may be is initially asked to describe 'a moment of good practice'. This is a moment of their teaching or another short moment in their professional lives, no longer than one hour and often as short as a few minutes, in which they think their values and beliefs as to what good teaching is shine through very clearly. Colleagues using this

approach have defined it as being a point in time which: 'if they were to be observed by peers for just a few minutes of teaching is the one they would choose'. It is a moment of practice that they are proud of and that reflects them at their self-perceived best.

After describing this moment of practice, the teacher is asked to explain why they feel that this moment of practice demonstrates their definitions of good teaching most clearly (*on the diagram this stage in the conversation is shown by the hexagon*). This conversation although more extended than these examples, often reveals answers such as these, below. Both these quotations are from conversations that we have been given permission to use:

A history teacher describing a moment of practice they are proud of and why: 'by using the card sort, and the conversations it generates, I get the sense that they are deeply involved in critical thinking. To me that is what history teaching is about.'

A dance teacher describing a moment of practice they are proud of and why: 'I think at



this point they are creating new dance, new art but with an understanding of these cultural conventions – new-ness and understanding of the depth that underpins dance, I think’.

Having accessed through this discussion the teacher’s values and beliefs about what good teaching is, the conversation then moves on to where these values and beliefs come from (*on the diagram this is the rectangle*) and to why they define good teaching in this way. These can at times be to do with childhood or student-hood experiences that they remember positively. They can also be about negative learning experiences that they do not want to repeat for their students, now that they are a teacher. Or equally they can relate to experiences as a trainee, to inspirational colleagues or to learning experiences entirely outside a formal setting.

Having together built a cognitive map of their values and beliefs about teaching, through the three stages of the conversation so far, only then is reference made to research literature (*the triangle on the diagram*). At this point the teacher is asked to design their own future reading map and think of ways by which they can find writings by others, who may share their values and perceptions regarding good teaching, and which might develop their understanding. This is the final stage of the

process, indicating that the teacher’s experiential expertise is clearly valued. Research literature is therefore implicitly presented as a distinct and useful way for the teacher to reach a deeper understanding of their own experiential knowledge rather than a challenge to it.

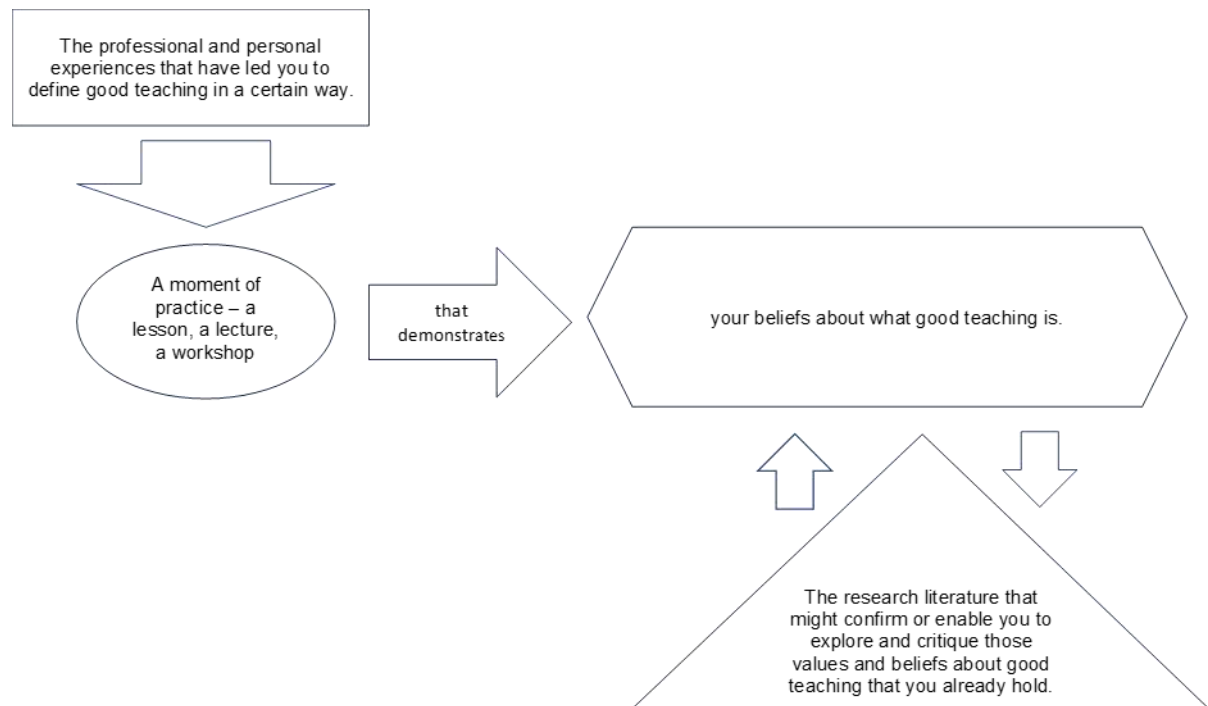
We find this model for structuring a conversation about teaching both affirming and engaging. Teachers we have worked with consistently feed-back positively. Within the masters’ module mentioned at the start of this short discussion, this model is used to support teachers to engage in an autoethnographic consideration of themselves as professionals. This is facilitated by the time-focused, jump off point, that they identify. As previously mentioned this is typically a moment or experience in which they feel distinctly, professionally competent and confident. That is not to indicate that less positive experiences are excluded from the process, but they are part of the critique which engagement with relevant literature allows, rather than the focus.

We believe, and our experience supports the view, that a positive starting point supports a more balanced process of critical reflection. In our experience teachers’ views on good teaching are revealed to be broad and balanced but very diverse. It is a strength of

this model that it allows individuals to access their sometimes idiosyncratic approaches and to take them forward for exploration and critique. In future months we will be exploring

the conversations this model generates more fully and will be presenting our findings in further publications.

Diagram illustrating a conversation that enables teachers to explore how they define good teaching.



Ambition School Leadership National Coaching Conference 2018:

High Impact Coaching - A Facilitated Key Note by Julie Starr

A Thinkpiece Working Paper by Laura Saunders

Introduction & Context – my *Sankalpa*

I am a professional coach, facilitator, leader, researcher and educator working across the UK to support professionals in galvanising their strengths to develop their practice in whatever they do. I believe in learning, collaboration and creativity in all that I do, so this piece is a reflective review of an experiential workshop that is written in line with my sense of the day: from the heart rather than the head, as this was where my learning resided.

My *sankalpa* (my intention) for this piece is to convey the learning and development that took place during the Ambition School Leadership 2018 National Coaching Conference at Nottingham University in September 2018 through personal reflection.

Ambition School Leadership (Ambition), soon to merge with the Institute for Teaching, supports the professional development of school leaders in England in order to deliver greater impact and equality of opportunity and achievement for children and young people in schools experiencing disadvantage. Their programmes adopt facilitative learning

through seminars, residentials and one to one coaching.

Each year they call all the freelance coaches working with Ambition to a national conference for professional development. The 2018 conference *High Impact Coaching*, was designed to empower coaches and further develop our practice. Many of the Ambition coaches are experienced senior leaders in schools, and in education more widely, who all have a love for learning and a values-driven rationale for working with Ambition participants.

This year's conference was delivered by Julie Starr, a "widely respected authority on coaching, mentoring and personal development" (Starr Consulting, 2018) who works to "promote change in business" (Starr, 2017). She has written numerous coaching and mentoring books, featured in a documentary about coaching and is the managing director of Starr Consulting; a coaching practice working across numerous industries, for over 20 years.



The Scene – our *Sankalpa*

Having travelled from far and wide to Nottingham University, there was a definite ‘buzz’ in the air amongst the 70 coaches and the coaching team from Ambition as we all settled into anticipatory discussion about the day and about all of our endeavours since last seeing each other.

Following welcomes and introductions from Dr. Trish Turner, Coaching Consultant for Ambition, and CEO James Toop, our anticipation was met with full force when Julie Starr began speaking.

“Own your own message, speak your own truth”

(Starr, 2017: 125)

Julie led with, and encouraged throughout, a call to find our individual *Sankalpa* for the day and for our developing practice, and to commit to it. And so set the theme for the day: a sense of intention, commitment and deep learning. Early on, we were aware that this was not going to be a day of ‘adding to our toolkits’, but more about developing a depth of emotional understanding for ourselves as coaches, in line with values for which Ambition stand.

Themes – our learning

“...Coaching is a style of conversation, or conversations, that one person has with another. The person who is the coach intends to produce a conversation that will benefit the other person in a way that relates to their learning and progress.”

(Starr, 2017: 5)

An interesting early assertion that a number of us mulled over later in the day, was about the focus of coaching in terms of the people involved. We were encouraged to think about who it is for. Many of us exchanged conversations about the purpose of ‘serving others’ through coaching and Julie gently challenged us to consider that all coaching conversations are ultimately to serve the coach, as well as serving the coachee (an issue of *ego* – discussed more later): a reflection that continued throughout the day.

Through careful, clean and attentive language, Julie shaped the day around our questions, feedback and formative learning, taking challenge with open arms and genuine consideration, and this throughout led to genuine authenticity from everyone present. Our reflection was prompted by Julie’s use of specific models and resources she uses or has created around ‘levels’ of experience and maturity of the coach, the *ego*, the Coaching Path (Starr, 2016), and paired listening and summarising exercises.



Julie surfaced a strong and impactful discussion around experience of coaching/coaches when discussing 'levels':

"...[A] pitfall of assuming relevant knowledge of experience is that we reduce the clarity of our focus and attention. When we divert our thoughts to past coaching conversations, we lose our focus on the present. This impairs the quality of our attention and listening, which in turn affects our ability to appreciate fully what the coachee is telling us, and so coach effectively."

(Starr, 2017: 153-154)

This called upon us to reflect on when and how often we move all the way between 'novice' to 'mastery', (described by Julie as those 'magical' moments when the conversation is so in flow it is innately working). It reminded many of us of Professor David Clutterbuck's workshop at the previous Ambition National Coaching Conference, when he focused in on maturity levels of coaches. There were many synergies between these two speakers on this topic. The notion was agreed early on in the day that we all reside in a state of flux between these 'levels', often occupying all or most of them in any one coaching conversation, and that self awareness around that was a demonstrator of maturity as a coach.

Her ability to coach us as a (very large) group was what supported the depth of our thinking: when we asked questions, she listened and probed, challenged and supported. Without wanting to sound like a clichéd romance novel, when she responded so intimately to our questions, it tended to feel like we were the only two people in the room because she invested in and heard us, true to her coaching style.

A fundamental part of the day, for me at least, was the live coaching demonstration Julie led with an Ambition colleague. This was the part that gave us a true sense of what Julie Starr means by 'coaching' and the impact it can have in a very short space of time. An extremely brave and willing colleague gave herself over to the conversation with Julie which surfaced some profoundly emotive topics that served to touch the whole room. Julie used simple and effective tools carefully: building rapport, neutrality, feedback, summarising and observing; and the most powerful tools in the kit: listening, questioning and silence. Moreover, to observe, it was like Julie gave *herself* over to our colleague, which then begged us to reflect again on who coaching is for: the coach or the client. I am still reflecting, weeks later, on how she achieved the balance of support, challenge, compassion, neutrality and minimal (for when is it ever wholly removed?) bias.

Later in the day, certainly around the point that I realised I didn't want it to end, Julie presented a series of considerations that a number of us had been anticipating: the ego. She began by crediting her colleague and mentor, Brandon Bays (author of 'The Journey') as saying:

"Your ego is a false identity that your mind constructed and then you took up residence in."

(Starr, 2017: 155)

Crucially, she dispelled the common understanding of 'ego' as 'egotistical' and 'arrogant' in favour of seeing its neutrality and all behavioural barriers 'driven by ego' (Starr, 2017: 155). She challenged us to tell colleagues sitting near us 'who we are'. Quickly many of us fell in to the trap of labelling ourselves as daughters, sons, husbands, wives, parents, professionals, educators, good people, able coaches, etc., raising our self-consciousness and 'inbuilt reluctance to appear vulnerable to others'. She used the analogy of people at party. Typically we might picture the person at the centre of things, deep in discussion, the life and soul as the person with the 'ego', but she also presented the person typically hiding in the kitchen, not wanting to move from the familiar spot as being held back by their ego.

"A healthy relationship with our ego is to be aware of its influence and still have free choice in situations."

(Starr, 2017: 156)

She deepened the topic by explaining that our ego adopts avoidance strategies: *Inflation*, *Deflation* and *Rigidity*. We were encouraged to reflect on when we commit the selfie of the subconscious and *inflate* (boast, exaggerate, build ourselves up); when we demonstrate false modesty and *deflate* (reducing ourselves, withdrawing, being shy, etc.); and when we tend 'get stuck' or demonstrate *rigidity* (being inflexible, stubborn, refusing to change or adapt). Crucially, it was about spotting where our trigger points are for adopting these behaviours.

A notion she raised that I have been using with a number of clients since the conference, was when she related *ego* to *motivation*. She suggests that all issues we experience are down to either the need for approval or the need for control. Both on the day and in use since, this notion instills silence and an intense and immediate level of self-enquiry on the part of the client: one that is potent for their learning. In considering this sense of ego, we were once again encouraged to revisit the notion of 'who coaching is for: the coach or the coachee' and who we are serving when coaching, and where our own ego lies in

the transactional nature of a coaching relationship.

Almost breaking our thoughts, she summarised that section of the day with two assertions:

“Stop playing safe and small: be compassionate with yourselves about it, whatever it is [need for approval or need for control].”

(Starr, 2018: conference delivery)

and

“Follow your breadcrumbs to help you become you.”

(Starr, 2018: conference delivery)

Both statements clearly acted as calls to self care and self awareness; a rather apt and profound ending to an excellent day.

And now...?

I look forward to seeing the feedback report from the day, to further reflect on learnings and views of my colleagues and to see how they are interpreting the day’s teachings. In the meantime, I continue to reflect on my *sankalpa*, that has developed to focus more on my inner world and my ‘breadcrumbs’ by committing to self care and time for myself and my clients.

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The Impact of School Direct on Mentoring and Tutoring Relationships in Secondary Initial Teacher Education

A Research Working Paper by Jane Martindale

The introduction of the School Direct (SD) model of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in England, with school-led partnerships, finds trainees spending more time in school and less in universities. In this paper I explore the impact of how this potentially affects the formation of relationships between trainees on both SD and the more conventional university-led Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) with their school-based subject mentor (SM).

The Teaching Agency (2012) guidance to SD recruitment focused on high-calibre trainees, suggesting the 'cherry picking' of better qualified or more experienced candidates. Prior to the study I had conjectured that, with SD trainees spending some time in their placement school prior to the university induction phase, they would form a 'better relationship' with their SM and would see schools as having the greatest assessment role in their qualification, with the reverse being the case for PGCE trainees. This paper describes research into how this difference was more widely perceived. Given the shift in balance of mentoring and assessment roles

that the changes bring, the study set out to examine how perceptions and expectations might impact on mentoring relationships in ITE.

Background

The quality of relationships between trainee teachers and those directly involved in their training is crucial to trainee success (Goodfellow & Sumsion, 2000; Hobson, 2009; Johnston, 2010). The potential impact of the possible changes to mentoring relationship therefore emerged as a pertinent concept to explore. Furthermore, I considered that school subject mentors might have had similar thoughts and that the trainees themselves may have differing perceptions and expectations of those involved in their training and assessment (Bullough & Draper, 2004; Hobson, Malderez, Tracey, Kerr, Giannakaki, Pell & Tomlinson, 2008; Long, 2009).

A number of factors affect mentoring relationships in ITE (Hobson, 2009), however, for the purposes of this paper the focus will



primarily be on expectations, perceptions and the impact of assessment.

Mentoring in initial teacher education

Becoming a teacher is a highly emotional experience (Hobson, Malderez, Tracey, Kerr & Pell, 2005) and a positive and supportive atmosphere where secure relationships allow for honest and open exchange of views essential (Hayes, 2001; Kim & Danforth, 2012; Scottish Inspectorate, 2005; Tedder & Lawry, 2009). The quality of the relationships trainees develop with mentors whilst on placement is crucial to their success (Goodfellow & Sumsion, 2000; Johnston, 2010) and something trainees themselves suggest far outweighs other factors (Hobson et al., 2005; Rothera, Howkins & Hendry, 1995). Successful mentoring does not simply happen by putting two people together (Long, 2009). However, this is often the reality in ITE, with difficulties emerging as a result of these arranged relationships (Hobson, Ashby, Malderez & Tomlinson, 2009; Scandura, 1998), often formed quickly and in atmospheres of high expectation (Hopper, 2001). Understanding the expectations and boundaries of these relationships is key (Kay & Hinds, 2012) but the speed with which the mentor-mentee relationship has to be formed

in ITE rarely affords the time for both parties to develop this.

Expectations for and of mentors and mentees can be ambiguous for a variety of reasons.

Mentors sometimes have unrealistic expectations of trainees or may be influenced by experiences with prior students (Johnston, 2010). Early experiences can create the 'Halo effect', allowing initial impressions or single incidents to outweigh other evidence (Parsloe, 1992), or perceptions of trainees and their ability can cause the 'Pygmalion effect' whereby they succeed to the level their mentors expect of them (Rosenthal & Jacobsen, 1966). If perceptions exist that SD trainees are better qualified and/or more experienced than PGCE trainees, mentors' higher expectations of these trainees, could perhaps result in over achievement of SD and conversely underachievement of PGCE trainees.

Differing perceptions of the mentor role by both mentor and mentee can be common and trainees' prior perceptions about teachers' roles and relationships, commonly differ from reality. Expectations can be unrealistic and trainees are often unaware of how demanding they are or have little awareness of mentors' other responsibilities and lives. (Bullough & Draper, 2004; Hayes, 2001). Hobson (2009) noted a direct correlation

between how positively trainees rated the mentor-mentee relationship and their rating of the support received. Good support has been perceived to be both instructional and psychological (Hobson et al., 2009; Lindgren, 2005). Availability of time appears key to effective mentoring; most mentor time allocation is however inadequate (Brooks, 2000; Hobson et al., 2009; Robinson & Robinson, 1999). With SD trainees spending more time in schools and having less contact with university tutors, they could potentially look to school mentors for a greater level of support than perhaps PGCE trainees might.

Despite debate around whether mentoring can be truly successful if assessment is part of the relationship, it is in fact a dominating aspect of school placements (Hobson et al., 2008; Maynard & Furlong, 1995; Roberts, 2000). The necessity for assessment of competence affects both mentor and mentee, changing relationships from openness and empowerment to conformity and compliance (Long, 2009). Mentors, although supporters of the trainee, are also gatekeepers to the profession, as such conflicts of interest arise with the ability of mentors to facilitate mentees to talk openly and honestly brought into question, (Bullough & Draper, 2004; Colley, 2002, 2003; Roberts, 2000). With the potential of SD seeing school mentors having the greater assessment role, than that

perceived by PGCE trainees, there is the possibility of this affecting mentoring relationships differently for each group of trainees.

Method

This was a comparative study designed to investigate if there are perceived differences in the quality of mentoring relationships on the two training routes and, if found, whether differences in expectations, perceptions and the effect of assessment are influencing factors.

The aim of the study was to compare experiences and perceptions of Secondary PGCE and SD ITE trainees, trained at the same Higher Education partnership institution, and their school subject mentors (SM: the subject specialist taking day to day responsibility for trainee).

The study draws on subjective viewpoints of individuals in ITE relationships, illuminating perceptions and experiences of real people in real situations. The subjectivity of the study is acknowledged as, despite questions of validity, reflections on real life experiences are pivotal in enhancing our understanding of relationships in ITE. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to gather data

with surveys and semi-structured interviews as the primary data gathering tools.

Triangulation was methodological.

Use of surveys, allowed large amounts of data to be gathered, from which generalisations could be drawn and focus for interviews developed. The surveys were cross-sectional, at one point in time, and carried out on-line. Responses were gathered from 203 SMs and 144 trainees (made up of 112 PGCE, 29 SD and 3 Salaried SD).

Respondents were asked to consider quality of relationships and factors affecting those both positively and negatively and to identify key responsibilities of the SM. Trainees were asked to consider the quality of support received and compare this to prior expectations. SMs were asked to consider whether they had had any preconceived notions of differences between SD and PGCE trainees and whether these had been borne out by experience and whether they had adopted different approaches to mentoring the two groups.

Semi-structured interviews were used as the second tool for data collection to allow for deeper exploration of subjective experiences and attitudes. Five trainees were interviewed individually. Two group interviews were also

conducted, with six PGCE and six SD trainees.

Three SMs, who had experience of working with trainees on both training routes, were interviewed. It is recognized that although interview sample sizes were small, they have integrity in their own right as they were a source of in-depth, contextualized information providing insights, rather than generalisations. Actions were taken to mitigate the effects associated with surveys and interviews, including careful wording of questions, anonymity and assurances of confidentiality.

Results

Overall analysis of the data collected via on-line surveys and interviews revealed some differences in trainee ratings of relationships with school mentors and the support they offered.

The relationship between subject mentor and trainee

When considering the quality of relationships, trainee ratings as excellent were comparable between PGCE and SD trainees (74.5% and 77.5% respectively). SMs rated relationships as excellent slightly higher with PGCE (80.9%) compared with SD (67.2%).

When considering the key responsibilities of the subject mentor, perceptions of the subject mentor role were fairly similar across mentors, PGCE and SD trainees. Differences were few and fairly unremarkable.

When considering factors affecting the trainee-subject mentor relationship, mentor approachability was identified by both PGCE and SD trainees as the top positive factor. Restricted contact time was identified as the greatest negative impact on relationships by both trainees and mentors. Mentors reported spending far more time with trainees than that allocated for the role, with some having no time allocated at all. Both SD and PGCE trainee perceptions of time allocations were at odds with reality and they tended to only consider the time allotted to formal mentoring meetings, as contact time, omitting to include the numerous 5 and 10 minute informal interactions during each week.

Overall, trainees rated the support they had received from their SMs similarly. PGCE trainees (45%) rated this as 'better than expected' more often than SD (34%). Again, there was a correlation between the perceived quality of the support received and the quality of the relationships with SMs.

Half of the SMs who had experience of both SD and PGCE trainees, suggested having differing expectations of trainees prior to

placements commencing, with just over half of these proposing these were justified. Almost all implied that SD trainees were expected to be better than the PGCE trainees in some way, suggesting they would be more experienced, more confident and better organised, they would learn faster, be more capable and able to take on greater responsibility more quickly and initially be better teachers. Notions existed that SD trainees were more involved in the wider school but this was balanced with a recognition that similar opportunities may not have been offered to PGCE trainees.

There were suggestions that SD trainees 'behaved' more like members of staff and were treated as colleagues or were more responsible, so given more responsibility. However, when asked to qualify this, explanations could not be given with mentors recognising that trainees probably behaved differently because they were in fact treated differently. One mentor suggested that the SD trainees were pushed harder and thus made better progress; another thought that the SD trainees were more confident but recognised that these 'signals of confidence' were perhaps triggered by mentors' differing perceptions and thus different treatment.

All interviewed mentors believed SD trainees were of a higher calibre than PGCE trainees

but had nothing to base this expectation on other than the fact they had been selected by their alliance. One mentor suggested SD trainees as having a reputation to lose but the PGCEs one to gain. There was an inference that most PGCE trainees had 'failed' to secure SD places and were therefore lower calibre. Mentors did not always consider that PGCE trainees had indeed chosen their HEI-led training programme in preference to the SD route.

Most PGCE trainees suggested they had a more honest and open relationship with their university tutor than their SM. Some suggested that within the school environment there was a need to remain 'professional', which inhibited their ability to be truly honest with their SM. Conversely, SD trainees suggested that they had the most honest relationship with their SM.

The perceived impact of assessment on relationships

When the trainees were asked who they perceived to have the greatest assessment role, most SD suggested the university tutor and most PGCE suggested the SM. Despite the notion that assessment negatively impacts mentoring relationships, only 1% of trainees believed assessment had any effect on the quality of mentoring relationships.

Discussion

The key intention of the research was a comparative study between PGCE and SD secondary programmes' mentoring relationships. Perhaps the most significant difference emerging from the research was the SMs' difference in expectations of the trainees on the two training routes.

Assumptions around trainee perceptions of assessment roles were not supported by the data and in fact showed the reverse. Whilst PGCE trainees saw SMs as having the greatest assessment role, SD trainees saw this lying with the university. Although the survey data did not support the notion that assessment would negatively impact on relationships, there was some indication that trainees felt assessment did affect their ability to be truly honest and open. This aligns with the notion of assessment changing honest and open relationships to those of conformity and compliance, (Long, 2009).

Although the survey data suggested SMs approached their relationships with PGCE and SD trainees similarly, there was evidence that they had differing expectations of trainees. There was some evidence of the 'Halo effect' (Parsloe, 1992) coming into play, with some mentors believing SD trainees to be more experienced and more capable at the start of the programme. The terms 'hand-picked' and

'cherry-picked' were used in interviews with an inference that the trainees were therefore of a higher calibre. This of course had been a focus of the Teaching Agency (2012) guidance to SD recruitment. However, it is interesting to note that the actual numbers of trainees with 2:1 degree classifications or above were comparable on the two routes the previous year (NCTL, 2013). One might argue that the schools were indeed 'hand-picking' but perhaps doing so to find candidates that were most closely matched to the school and the department rather than those with the greatest potential. This also raises questions around the objectivity of the mentoring approach in some schools and whether trainees were receiving a broad experience or simply being 'moulded' by their schools to a far greater extent than PGCE trainees.

Perceptions of SD trainees having greater potential and being more responsible seemed unfounded. However, the fact that they existed had the potential to cause the 'Pygmalion effect' (Rosenthal & Jacobsen, 1966) with trainees succeeding to the level their mentors expected; perhaps resulting in underachievement by PGCE trainees in comparison.

There was no evidence to support the assumption that SD trainees, having formed relationships with SMs before PGCE trainees

could, would rate their relationships with SMs more highly than the PGCE trainees. This is perhaps surprising given that some degree of 'selection' and matching of trainees to mentors (Scandura, 1998) and departments would have taken place for SD trainees and perhaps helped negate some of the effects of the 'arranged' relationships common in ITE and the difficulties emerging from these (Hobson et al., 2009; Hopper, 2001; Scandura, 1998). In addition to this, the suggestion that SD trainees were treated more like professional colleagues (Foster, 1999) and absorbed into communities of practice (Hayes, 2001; Johnston, 2010; Wenger, 2000) should perhaps have also positively influenced how they rated their relationships with SMs. However, there was no evidence in the data to support this notion.

Having unrealistic expectations of SMs is a common problem in ITE (Bullough & Draper, 2004 and Hayes, 2001). Perhaps SD trainees being more reliant on their subject mentors, as they looked less to university tutors for support generally, may result in expectations not being met. Both SD and PGCE trainees identified a lack of contact with SMs as the greatest negative impact on the mentoring relationship (Hobson, 2009 and Smith & McLay, 2007), but as there was no discernible difference in the importance the two groups placed on this, it would not account for the

difference in rating of relationships. Mentors also flagged contact time as an issue, often reporting an inadequate allocation; perceptions of how much time mentors spent with trainees each week was at odds with trainee perceptions suggesting a mismatch in expectations.

Some SMs perceived SD trainees to be more independent and proactive about their own training and development but also admitted that they may not have offered similar opportunities to PGCE trainees.

In conclusion there are some considerations those involved in ITE should make.

School SMs need to be wary of making assumptions and developing preconceptions about particular trainees based on the training route they are following to avoid mismatching of expectations or under achievement. Schools should avoid treating

SD and PGCE trainees differently to ensure all are equally supported within the community of practice. Schools need to ensure SMs are allocated appropriate time each week to carry out mentoring duties. However, mentors need to be explicit with trainees about the amount of time available to ensure expectations are met.

The study was carried out over the first year of the SD programme, 2013-14 (excluding the pilot); a further longitudinal study would be prudent to establish the true impact of the SD programme on mentoring relationships in ITE.

Acknowledgement

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Book Review of

Thom, J. (2018) *Slow Teaching*, John Catt Publishing

By Susan Atkinson

In keeping with the title and message of the book, this has been a slow review, with many re-readings and revisits to particular sections. Paradoxically, it is a quick book to read, but it benefits from and encourages a thoughtful, mindful and reflective approach. The key message of the book is that it is easy for teachers to become overwhelmed by the demands of the job: we know that, as demands increase and the to-do list seems never ending, we find ourselves trying to do more, and do it more quickly. Instead, Jamie Thom suggests stepping back and slowing down to improve teaching and establish a sensible work-life balance. Sections cover the philosophy of the slow teaching approach; slow teaching through slow talk, relationships and classroom strategies; and the benefits of the approach for teacher improvement, wellbeing and leadership.

The book is a goldmine of useful nuggets of information and suggestions. I particularly liked the idea of 'knowledge organisers', distilling all the useful information for a unit of study to one page. This is an idea I will use

in HE to encourage clarity, and also because students appear reluctant to read a whole module handbook! There is also an emphasis on establishing students' existing knowledge on topics, encouraging links between topics and the benefits of knowing how children learn. Thom advocates moving away from assessing learning and teaching on single lessons to a more long term view, focusing on key questions and identified skills. My only real caveat is that the book may be geared more towards secondary teaching, with the emphasis on learning from the teacher's input. Early years teachers in particular may need to adapt the approach more for an active, play-based pedagogy.

The slow questions at the end of each chapter encourage reflection on the reader's own practice whilst emphasising the key points made. This is a book to read, re-read and think about; it is not necessarily going to provide strategies you can use immediately but it might encourage you to rethink your pedagogy and approach. I suspect it may be more successful if taken up by schools or



departments rather than individuals.

Establishing slow teaching is likely to be time consuming and effortful at first, but is

worthwhile if it prevents burn out and

disillusion and keeps good teachers teaching.

Book Review and Synopsis of

**Hargreaves, A. & O'Connor, M. (2018) Collaborative Professionalism;
Thousand Oaks Publishing, CA, Corwin Press**

By Tomaz Lasic

A few weeks ago I came across an interesting phrase on the grand serendipitor Twitter - "collaborative professionalism". What made it even more interesting was the book of that name that bore the names of Andy Hargreaves and Michael O'Connor. I have used Hargreaves' work before, one of his seminal papers is on the list of my all time go to papers I would invite any educator to read and chew through (maybe a post about that next time). I have also been passionate about teacher agency for a long time and recently I was delighted and honoured to have written a chapter for the upcoming Flip The System Australia. In short, reading Hargreaves & O'Connor's Collaborative Professionalism: When Teaching Together Means Learning for All fell on some pretty fertile soil and I couldn't resist a Twitter invitation from Andy and Michael to let them know what I think of the book.

'Collaborative Professionalism: When Teaching Together Means Learning for All' is a book about educational leadership. Now, I am not exactly a leader (or perhaps am in that

fluid and contest[able] sense of the word Jon Andrews spoke about at the recent ACEL conference). I am 'just' a teacher. But reading the book reveals very quickly that this is a text for the leaders as much as the teachers. It speaks to us all in education.

Collaboration, of course, is nothing new in teaching. Quite the opposite it seems, as we are encouraged to collaborate in our work even more these days. There is no dispute whether we should collaborate, only really about the purpose, format, scale and frequency of it. But not all collaboration is of course the same. It can often be a soft sell of how-to-get-staff-buy-into-our-idea-while-appearing-they-had-a-say, ragtag of episodic, contrived conversations that are superficial, weak in effect, usually added on to teaching, polite, uncomfortable for the fear of sticking one's neck out to avoid appearing as either boisterous or bashful type, or they quickly descend into the useless trad v prog loops. If you have never seen this you either a) don't work in a school or b) you do work in a school



but are incredibly lucky not to have seen, felt it.

Hargreaves & O'Connor posit that effective collaboration is a 'mixture of pride and humility' (xv). Pride in one's capacity that diminishes us all if withheld, humility in acceptance that no one knows everything. Or as they put it:

"Admitting that, at first, we don't know what the issue might be is part of our professionalism. Inquiring together and acting upon is the essence of collaborative professionalism. "

They helpfully point out the obvious, so often hidden in plain sight, that "no profession can serve people effectively if its members do not share and exchange knowledge about their expertise or about the clients, patients or students they have in common." This is the essence of professionalism and co-labor-ating (co-working).

I invite you to read how Hargreaves and O'Connor distinguish between *professional collaboration* and *collaborative professionalism* (CP). The former takes forms of talking, sharing and reflecting together as teachers. We have been doing professional collaboration, with varying degrees of success and impact on our students and ourselves. We have also done it often to satisfy some

distantly-derived rubric (xyz 'hours of approved PD', myriad of local and national teaching standards etc) or apply some well-intentioned school-based initiative 'from the top'. Professional collaboration is descriptive (and sometimes pre-scriptive) as it delineates what should teachers do.

Collaborative professionalism is normative. It proposes, then seeks to critique in order to optimise the positive impact on students as a COLLECTIVE, not as individuals, in a given context. The lexicon of collaborative professionalism is one of unceasing inquiry and open critique, matched and supported by solidarity, care and trust. Collaborative professionalism extends beyond mere meeting, sharing, reflecting ... and then going back doing our own individual thing. It is de-privatising individual teaching practice - we're all in it, no exceptions. In it, failures and successes are not attributable to a specific individual but to the collective. This "shields professional learning and failure from the possibility of personal shame and blame" (p. 39) as teachers bear "collective responsibility for other [teachers'] impact". In collaborative professionalism, teachers' work is not about *my* students but all about *our* students.

Collective professionalism however is not some nameless, de-personalised drudgery inside a common system. Quite the opposite



in fact. Individuals are valued as part of the collective. Diversity and disagreement of individual perspectives is essential (see previous point about the mixture of pride and humility) - but always open to critique along the collectively agreed standards of feedback, behaviour and protocol. To use a sporting parlance, you as a teacher are as good as you help your team improve, not as good as your individual score. What matters is the collective, rather than individual, efficacy - belief of teachers in their deliberate attempts to make a positive influence on students TOGETHER. While often disputed (links forthcoming), research by Hattie (2018, 2012) indicates that giving teachers feedback on their work and collective teacher efficacy have a very significant impact on student learning.

Collective efficacy is just one of the ten tenets of collaborative professionalism identified by Hargreaves and O'Connor. Many of them would (and do) truly rock the boat of the existing systems. For example [collective autonomy]:

"Collective autonomy means that educators have more independence from top-down bureaucratic authority but less independence of each other. Collective autonomy values teachers' professional judgement that is informed by a range of evidence rather than marginalising that judgement in favour of the

data alone. But collective autonomy is not individual autonomy. Teachers are not individually inscrutable or infallible. The egg crate has emptied; the sanctuary has gone. Instead, teachers' work is open - and open to each other - for feedback, inspiration and assistance." (p.109)

Imagine having this sort of agency next time some other 'what works' is dropped in from somewhere else to be copied in applied as the solution to (y)our problems with no consent, critique, and depending on a small number of evangelists who may leave at any time.

And herein lies the trouble you say ...

Apart from the obvious enthusiasm for collaboration, the authors helpfully point out a few cons, threats of collaboration.

Collaboration can lead to groupthink and culling of tall poppies, hiding in the crowd, suppression of critical judgement, bending to the will of the tyrants, passivity and compliance in the form of conflict avoidance and more. Collaboration can also be very weak, while giving the appearance of vitality.

You and I would not be the first people to recognise that the shifts and nuances of power flows in any knowledge sharing/power sharing designs (Monsieur Foucault is smiling in his grave...) can easily undermine the best intentions. These would need to be seriously

attended to because CP would seriously bruise egos and wobble many a career path. Collaborative professionalism is NOT easy. The challenging conversations, one of the cornerstones of the model, could be “oppressive” (p. 95) too, (un)intentionally so.

To establish healthy CP, the authors point the importance of recognising the four Bs - before, betwixt, beside, beyond. The recognition of what was there *before* (CP) is crucial in recognising the longer trends of applying innovation and collaboration in a given context. Recognition of the broader culture into which CP lies alongside with, or rather is entangled *betwixt* with, is crucial in avoiding ineffective, and possibly foreign, unwelcome carbon-copies and transplants of models of CP across the world. Recognising what is provided *beside* CP in the form of support is crucial in providing and sustaining resources to implement CP. Finally, it is important to consider what connections doing CP has *beyond* the given context. Connections and learning not just from but with others beyond the confines of a given school or area is important for the longevity and quality of CP.

Paying attention to these four Bs demonstrates the importance of paying attention to local cultural practices and their history, reasons for the need to collaborate,

and resources available for this to happen. The diversity of these factors are a caveat to anyone thinking of parachuting a copy of something done well in Hong Kong or rural USA will work automatically in Western Australia, something the authors are at pains to point out throughout the book.

“Reform is like ripe fruit: It rarely travels well. Designs for collaborative professionalism are the same. But designs coming from afar can work if people actively figure out the relationship with their own culture.” (p 131)

The proposed ten tenets of collaborative professionalism and the four Bs to serve as a lens to see them through are an incredibly useful starting point in starting, or perhaps continuing, a path towards collaborative professionalism.

The book explores five highly functioning examples of collaborative professionalism: a high-performing state high school in Hong Kong; network of rural teachers across the north-western USA; primary school in affluent, stable Norway; professional learning communities in schools in a low socio-economic areas with high percentage of Indigenous students in Canada; and a truly transformational network of hundreds of school across the decentralised educational landscape in Colombia. The examples almost could not be further apart but the authors’

choice was deliberate. They simply wanted to show how the design of CP thrives in these wildly different contexts. They do so not to position CP as a universal, cookie-cutter (quick) 'fix', but as a provocation of what is possible when a genuine purpose meets thoughtful, contextualised application of the model.

Importantly, the purpose for CP is also very different in these contexts and depends highly on their needs. While in all of them teachers collaborate, in varying degrees, on pedagogy (ways of teaching), some of them spend more time on the matters of curriculum while others spend more time in collaborating on evaluation. Similarly, the PLCs of Canada and Escuela Nueva seek to transform the broader society they operate in while the Hong Kong, Norway and USA cases transform the school they work in. These differences clearly demonstrate the need for a very clear and precise purpose CP is established for in a given context.

Throughout the book there seemed to be another dimension, or rather reason for CP that is perhaps less explicit but crucial and ever present - establishment, maintenance and modelling of good, functioning, healthy, culturally responsive relationships between students, staff, school leaders and the communities they serve. In other words,

teachers collaborate not only to improve pedagogy, curriculum and/or evaluation to improve either whole society or a single school more narrowly. They collaborate to enact, benefit from and ultimately model good relationships which sustain CP. This 'relational' extension stems from a particular view of teaching process ([PCRK model](#)) my wife, a counselling psychologist, and I have been exploring lately. It is no surprise that the model was inspired by the seminal work on the importance of emotions and relationships in education by, you guessed it, Andy Hargreaves.

The final chapter suggesting what we should stop doing, continue doing and start doing (sounding similar to "The Russian Brothers" Ridoff, Moreoff and Startoff we jovially refer to in our school sometimes) is a provocation to action. I for one would love to connect with educators in these schools and jurisdictions to pick their brain as I have picked this book for articulating something I have long felt and sought. Thank you Andy and Michael for giving these thoughts a name, shape and examples to stimulate and lead.

Now go and read the book!

Postscript *Incidentally, collaborative professionalism design reminds me of the practice of workers self-management in a country I grew up in and does not longer exist.*



Anyone living in the former Yugoslavia post World War 2 will remember the word samoupravljajanje. Collaborative professionalism shares many idea(l)s with this practice which delivered great results for decades but eventually cracked under the collective weight of economic, political, social instability and aspirational turbo-capitalism in the region.

You can find the people mentioned in this review on twitter:

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CollectivED Thinking Out Loud

An interview with Pete Dudley

Please tell us who you are and what your current role in education is.

I'm Pete Dudley. I have three current roles in education. The first is in Camden where as Director of Education I've worked to help establish forms of collaboration at classroom, school and partnership level that extend and deepen improvement-capacity and local expertise. My second role is at Cambridge University where I run a Masters in Education Leadership and also research my driving professional interests: leadership of improvement through collaborative-enquiry aligned at classroom, school and system levels - and oracy. My third role is as President of the World Association of Lesson Studies which represents over 70 countries worldwide.

Please reflect on an episode or period in your career during which your own learning helped you to develop educational practices which remain with you today. What was the context, how were you learning, and what was the impact?

I was teaching in 1980s London when I took a one-year RSA Diploma in EAL. Part of this involved me (with my tutor) studying the subject curriculum in which I wanted to

support my bilingual pupils to learn, then devising how they could be supported to learn both the subject content and English at the same time. We taught the lessons, closely observing these children's learning and their spoken language use and development. Then we analysed what had 'worked' for them and what hadn't – re-planning the next session in the light of this collaborative evidence-pooling. I was thunder-struck at the insights that focusing together on learning in this way gave me about these pupils, their learning and also the know-how and agency to do something about it. Although I didn't realise until years later, these were a lesson studies.

When you work with colleagues or other professionals to support their development what are the key attributes that you bring with you, and what difference do these qualities make?

I like to think that I try to ensure that I am as well-informed as I possibly can be about our focus for development. I believe strongly in exploiting talk in learning processes and in developing collaboration. I believe all people can learn and succeed with the right motivation, feedback and co-learners. I try to get out of the way of their learning as soon as



I can. I love that Singaporean idea of TLLM (teach less learn more) and I think the same goes for leadership as for learning in this respect.

How do you turn educational challenges into learning opportunities?

You just have to. That's what good teaching is and it's what good teachers and leaders do. It's a way of seeing:- a mindset.

Who has influenced your educational thinking, and in what ways has this allowed you to develop?

Gosh! Consciously? Academics:- Mary James, Charles Desforges, Neil Mercer, Catherine Lewis, Michael Barber – oh and Lev Vygotsky of course. Practitioners:- so many amazing colleagues and leaders over the years who have allowed me to learn from them or steal their ideas, practices and strategies. Closer to home :- well my Mum was a special needs teacher and spent every night alone at the kitchen table patiently trying to work out how she could get inside the head, for example, of a fourteen year old who could not tell the time (yet could hold a coherent and rational conversation about it) and to work out what way of presenting the concepts involved and what forms of feedback could help him 'get it'. She never gave up and often succeeded.

She really should have kept a record of all those solutions!

Do you feel part of an educational 'tribe', and if so who are they and why do they matter to you?

I'm not sure educational identify politics are helping at the moment. I believe passionately in the need for professional collaboration, in the need for research that is close to practice and in the goal of educational leadership as one of ensuring that all pupils learn broadly and are not educationally disadvantaged by low income, prejudice or low self-expectations. This has led me *at times* to pursue, for example, setting pupil achievement targets to raise the expectations of a generation trained (as I was) that schools can do nothing to counter effects of social disadvantage – which of course we can. I am proud of many of the changes in our education system over the past 30 years but often still exasperated.

When someone you meet tells you they are thinking about becoming a teacher what advice do you give them?

I ask them if they like children and young people and I ask them why they want to teach. If it is because they believe they can help children learn and passionately want to, then I advise them to go for it. I warn them



that it can often feel hard and thankless but also that it is the most important job in the world and that without education we'd have no law, technology, medicine or human rights. Those who can 'do' should also teach.

If you could change one thing which might enable more teachers to work and learn collaboratively in the future what would you do?

I'd mass hypnotise policy makers to understand and act on the fact that the most impactful action school leaders can take for improving pupil outcomes is to lead their teachers in school based enquiries into how to improve the learning of their pupils (Robinson, 2009).

What is the best advice or support you have been given in your career? Who offered it and why did it matter?

I think the best support I have been given in my career – and advice – has been from people who believed in me and what I was aiming for but also whose fate has been bound up to an extent in me getting it right. These people have ranged from teachers, team-mates, bosses, and students. The advice has been very different depending on the circumstances, but what has made it matter and what has also made it helpful – even imperative (if sometimes deeply uncomfortable) was that in giving it they had my interests at heart but also the interests of those for whom I had responsibility.

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